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THE NEW YEAR.

BY WM. MACKINTOSH.

In fairy robes of sparkling hue,
With gentle smile and goodly cheer,
As if it ne'er could prove untrue,
To some began the vanished year.
But soon, alas, its sky's overcast.
Deep sorrow reigns in many hearts:
The brightest joy may fail to last,
And scarcely dawns ere it departs.

But let us make our armor fast.
There's sunlight still to cheer us on.
And drop the curtain on the past.
What's done can now be ne'er undone.
Prepared for aught the new may bring,
Let's glance along its future scope.
And tho' our hearts with grief may wring,
There's plenty room for cheering hope.

Thorns and Blossoms

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A BLACK VEIL," "HER MOTHER'S CRIME," "A BROKEN WEDDING RING," "MABEL MAY," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER I.

"JUNE'S palace paved with gold!" quoted Lord Ryvers as he looked down a long woodland glade, where shafts of golden light pierced the thick foliage of the stately trees, and lay with the dancing shadows on the grass. "It is indeed paved with gold," he added. "What colors of mine, what color mixed by mortal hand, could copy the tender green of the young grass, the lovely tints of the trees, the golden gleam of the sun?"

Randolph, Lord Ryvers, patrician by birth and master of half a dozen fair estates but an artist by nature, delighted in freeing himself from the trammels of society, and taking an artistic tour, without any of what he called the encumbrances of rank.

Having heard one day that no shire in England was so well wooded as Warwickshire, that for the beauty of its shaded walks and drives, the county of "Earl Guy" had no equal, he was not happy until he had told his mother, Lady Ryvers, that he was going on a sketching tour, and had left the great city behind him.

He had seen the loveliest spots in Warwickshire: he had visited the grand old castle; he had studied the loveliness of Stoneleigh Abbey and of Guy's cliff; he had revelled in the grand ruins of Kenilworth: he had admired the green woods, the brimming rivers, the deep clear meres; and at last he had reached the picturesque village of St. Byno's, where the quiet pastoral loveliness for which the county is famous is seen to perfection.

Every artist knows St. Byno's.

It is a sleepy village, with a placid stream running through it and deep green woods surrounding it on every side; its cottages are half hidden by noble chestnut-trees with green fields around them, where the cattle stand lazily knee-deep in the clear pools.

There the young artist had tarried.

He was delighted with St. Byno's, with the magnificence of its trees, the beauty of its streams.

On this particular morning, the second of June, he had gone to sketch in the woods. He placed his easel at the opening of a glade, and the first words that came to his lips were—"June's palace paved with gold!"

Lover of art, of nature, of beauty as he was, he stood silent before the glorious contrast of sunlight and shadow, the ripple of green foliage tinged with gold, which met his eyes.

Suddenly as he watched the light that gleamed, quivered, and fell in golden glory, he caught sight of a pale blue dress between the trees.

He took up the brushes and worked for a minute; then, on looking up, he was astonished to find two beautiful eyes fixed on him, and a sweet voice said—

"Is that a real picture? May I look at it?"

"It can hardly be called a picture yet," he answered, raising his hat courteously; "it is but the commencement of one. I find I cannot paint the sunlight as it falls yonder."

"May I look at it more closely?" she asked.

He moved aside, and, placing herself before the easel, she glanced at the still wet colors.

"No," she said, "you have not caught the sunlight."

As he gazed at her, standing in the bright June sunshine, Randolph, Lord Ryvers met his fate.

He turned his eyes with difficulty from the fair young face.

She was a tall slender girl, with a little graceful figure, golden hair and a face more beautiful than words can tell—fair and dainty, of the most delicate style of loveliness, with a broad low brow and eyes of clearest, darkest violet, that were almost black under the dark-fringed lashes.

The little white hands were ungloved, the white hat had for all ornament a bunch of corn-flowers, the dress was of plainest material, yet he could have knelt at her feet and paid her homage as to a queen.

"No," she repeated, "you have not caught the sunlight. Your light is too opaque—it wants transparency. It is yellow, and the sunlight is a faint amber."

"Thanks for your criticism," he said.

"You are very welcome," she replied; and the bewitching violet eyes looked frankly into his. "Many artists come here to sketch and paint the river and the woods but none of them catch the true color of the sunlight."

"You are a severe critic," said the young artist.

"I have not the least idea of criticism," she replied—"I know nothing of art-terms; but I can tell when nature is truthfully imitated and when it is not. The chief character of the sunlight is its transparency." The young artist bowed.

"I should like to ask you for a few lessons," he said; and her musical laughter rang through the trees.

"Ask me? Why, I have never had a lesson in my life; so I could scarcely undertake to give one," she replied.

He scarcely knew how to address her.

He would have liked to tell her how fair a picture she made, to ask her to stand while he sketched her; but he felt dazed by her beauty and the light of her wonderful eyes.

"I have been very abrupt in my remarks," she said, with a smile. "You must please forgive me. Every summer artists come hither, and my only recreation is in watching their pictures."

His face flushed.

This was the very opening he had desired.

"May I hope—may I beg," he said, "that you will sometimes honor me by looking at mine?"

"If I am passing by," she replied, with queenly indifference.

"You came purposely to look at the picture you were speaking of, did you not," he asked.

"Yes," she replied.

"I wish then," he said, "you would favor me by coming purposely to look at mine."

She laughed again, and the nonchalance of her laughter piqued him. With one bright glance she seemed to take in every detail of his face and figure.

"Those other artists were not like you," she said.

"Tell me in what way they differed from me," he requested.

"They were old men. One of them had flowing white hair, and you——"

"I am young," he said, "thank Heaven! Nevertheless you might take an interest in my success, just as you did in theirs."

"Certainly I might," she replied; and then she looked at him with frankly smiling eyes. "I believe," she said, "that you are almost the first young man to whom I have ever spoken. There are no young men in St. Byno's."

"I feel myself greatly honored," returned the young lord. "But what a strange place St. Byno's must be!"

"It is the loveliest spot in the whole world," said the girl proudly, "and the people here seem to me to live almost for ever. The Vicar and the lawyer must be sixty; and the doctor is a white-haired man."

"What becomes of the young men?" asked the artist.

"They never settle down here," she replied. "They go away to the large towns, as a rule, when they are boys. Sometimes," she added, with unconscious pathos, "they come home to the village; but they soon go back to the busy world. However, some of us never go away"—with a plaintive little sigh.

"It is an old-fashioned, quiet spot," he said musingly. "There are few such left. I like the place and the name—St. Byno's. It gives one the idea of woodbine stretching along the hedges."

"St. Byno's abounds with woodbine during the month of July," she said; and her heart warmed to him because he praised the home she loved. "I am glad you like the village. I am always grieved when I hear people say that it is dull and tame. What place could be tame with such a view as this?"

"You know the neighborhood well?" he interrogated.

"Yes," she answered—"every hill and valley, every lovely picturesque nook and corner."

"Then," he said, with grave courtesy, "perhaps you will tell me where I shall find the prettiest scenes?"

"If I may," she returned, suddenly remembering that he was a stranger, and that she knew nothing of him.

"Whose permission must you ask?" he said.

"My aunt's," she replied.

"May I ask," he said, standing bareheaded before her, "to whom have I the pleasure of speaking? You probably live somewhere near; and, as I am staying here for some little time, I should feel greatly honored by an introduction to you."

A flush came over the exquisite face.

"My name is Violet," she said, with sweet shy grace—"Violet Beaton."

"And you live here at St. Byno's?"

She turned and pointed to the left, where, through an opening in the trees, he caught a glimpse of a little cottage built of white stone and covered with climbing roses.

"Do you see the little house there amongst the trees?" she asked. "It is called Acacia Cottage, from the fine acacia-trees that grow around it. My aunt, Miss Alice Atherton, lives there, and I live with her."

"Have you no parents living?" he asked softly.

"No. I was telling you how long people live at St. Byno's; my parents were exceptions to the rule. My father died when I was ten years old, and my mother soon followed him, heart-broken. I have lived with my aunt ever since."

The beautiful head drooped, the musical voice faltered.

"If you are not busy, do stay for a few minutes," the young artist said eagerly. "It is so beautiful here this bright June morning."

A fallen tree lay near her, and Violet Beaton sat down upon it.

"I ought not to stay," she said; "my aunt will be angry at my long absence from home."

"I should not think any one would ever be angry with you," he remarked.

"You do not know my aunt," she said, laughing gaily. "She entertains some rather strong prejudices, and, above all things, she dislikes young men."

"She must be a somewhat formidable person," observed the artist.

"She is—and yet she is not," Violet said, growing suddenly grave and thoughtful. "I am so deeply indebted to her that I ought not to speak one word against her. She does not understand youth or happiness. She has but one aim and end in life, and that is the performance of what she considers to be duty. My aunt is tall and angular. She would not make a good subject for a picture, for there is not a graceful line about her. Neither could you fancy her crying or laughing, or kissing a child, or singing a song. She is always prim and precise. Yet she is good at heart."

"Many strictly good people are very disagreeable," he remarked.

She looked up with an expression of relief.

"Have you found out that?" she inquired. "I am so glad; I thought I was quite alone in entertaining such an unorthodox idea. I can just remember how beautiful my father's religion was—all love and charity; whereas every disagreeable word she speaks, is always attributed to her religious views."

"The life must be a dull one for you," he remarked, looking down at her beautiful face.

"It would be," she said, "did I not find so much pleasure in my surroundings."

"You love nature so much?" he inquired.

"Yes," she replied. "I am just eighteen and I have never been beyond the sound of the rush of the river yet. You see it runs just at the end of the garden; the acacia-trees grow quite down to the water's edge."

"You have never been away from this place in all your life?" he said wonderingly.

"No, not for a day," she replied. "Warwick is not very far away; but I have never even seen the grand old castle there."

"And I," he said, "though I am only a few years older than you see, have been almost all over the world."

"I long to see the world," she confessed, looking at him with a wistful expression. "I love St. Byno's; but I should not like to spend the whole of my life here. I should like to see the grand places I have read about. But then life is long."

He sighed when he heard the words, for he knew that poets and philosophers said just the opposite.

She was young, beautiful, quite innocent and ignorant of the ways of life.

He was like a man with a new picture to look at, a new book to read; he was enraptured and fascinated, he could have sat on the trunk of the fallen tree and listened to her for ever.

"Tell me about yourself," he said.

"I have nothing to tell," she replied. "You can understand how quiet and uneventful my life has been, for I have never left St. Byno's."

"I can understand how pleasant and simple it has been," he said.

"Yes," she answered, a shade of sadness coming over her face. "If my parents had lived, it would have been all that is most delightful. But my aunt has no sympathy with the young, neither has she any love for the beautiful, and consequently she is apt to regard me and my amusements with contempt. She—— Well, I cannot well

explain myself; but I am not very happy with her."

There was something of repressed feeling in the girlish face which touched the listener.

"My aunt," she continued, "does not even like the singing of the birds. She destroys the butterflies, but she lets the bees live, because they make honey, which she sells. Every one is eager to buy it; they say it is the finest honey in Warwickshire. Things that are beautiful and of use she tolerates; but, be they ever so beautiful and useless, she dislikes them."

"Under which category does she place you?" he asked.

"Under neither," was the reply. "In aunt Alice's mind I hold a position quite different from anything else in creation. She often says that I was born for her especial annoyance, to be her especial cross; and, though she is very kind to me in essential things, I believe it is true that I am a torment to her."

"Why?" he asked slowly. "Tell me why."

"Because I cannot fall in completely with all her views. She would like me to get up at a certain hour in the morning. If the sun is shining, I rise very early—I cannot wait for the regulation hour; and then my aunt is not pleased. She says that the dew destroys my shoes and dresses, that I should wait until 'the day is aired;' and, when I attempt to argue the point with her, she grows angry. Do you see where the water falls over the rock there and runs back into the stream?" the girl asked after a brief pause.

"Yes; I see," he replied. "How musical the sound of falling water is!"

"In the moonlight that fall makes a beautiful picture, and I often come here to look at it. I sometimes think it was through just such a wood as this that poor Queen Guinevere rode with the handsome knight by her side; but my aunt says that all fancies are ridiculous, and that we ought to think only of what is real."

"This world is beautiful enough," he said; "but I almost think the world of fancy is more beautiful still."

Violet gave a quick glad smile.

It was so delightful to have some tastes in common.

By this time Randolph, Lord Ryvers, had completely lost his heart.

He thought that this was the most natural beautiful, graceful girl he had ever seen, and that she completely outshone all the great ladies of his acquaintance. His heart beat fast as he looked at her.

But there was no thought of love in Violet Beaton's mind or heart.

She had an idea that she was not acting in the most prudent manner possible, though it was delightful to talk to some one who was young like herself. Presently a change came over her exquisite face—a shadow fell upon it.

"I understand," she said, "what it is to lead a life of repression. I have little time to myself; and everything I like best to have to deny myself. In our house everything goes on like machinery; we do the same thing every day at the same time. I do not remember the least variety or any break in the monotony for years."

"And you have never been from St. Byno's in your life?" he repeated.

It seemed to him a most extraordinary thing to have lived always in the same place.

"My mind and heart and brain travel," she said. "There will come a change into my life some day. I have often thought about the time when I shall go out into the great world;" and the beautiful eyes looked as though they would fain pierce the mists which obscured the future."

Lord Ryvers was at a loss what to say to her; yet he was afraid to remain silent, lest she should declare that it was time to go.

"Did they call you 'Violet' because of the color of your eyes?" he asked.

"No," she laughed; "my mother gave me the name because she was particularly fond of violets. All my offences, in my aunt's eyes, are summed up in the name 'Violet.'"

"Do you know the poem of the 'Queen's Marys'?" asked Lord Ryvers. "Your name reminds me of it. It begins—

"'There was Mary Beaton, and Mary Seaton,
And Mary Carmichael, and me.'

Are you descended from those same Beatons?"

"I should think not; I should hope not," she replied.

"Hope not! Why?" he asked.

She looked around at him with impatient scorn, her face flushed, her eyes shining.

"I have strong likes and strong dislikes," she replied; "but, if there is one thing I dislike more than another, it is what you call—you people who live in the outer world, I mean—the aristocracy."

He shrank back, as though she had struck him.

"What an extraordinary thing!" he said. "Why should you hate them? What have the aristocracy done to you?"

"Nothing to me," she answered. "But during the winter nights, while aunt Alice and I sit sewing, she tells me stories of the aristocracy. Aunt Alice has seen a great deal of life, and she retails her experiences for my benefit."

"I think the—the aristocracy quite as good as their neighbors," he said.

"That is because you do not know them," she remarked, laughing triumphantly. "You have lived your life amongst the beauties of art and nature. What should you know of the follies, the sins, the idle, useless, frivolous lives of aristocrats?"

"Why, I belong to them!" he was about to say, when he suddenly remembered that it would be very bad policy on his part to tell her that he was an aristocrat, seeing that she had openly proclaimed her dislike for them. So he answered quietly, "If you will teach me, I will dislike them also."

"Dislike comes by instinct, not by training or teaching," she remarked; and then she added hurriedly, "I must go;" and Lord Ryvers felt all at once a new and strange feeling of desolation.

"I must go," repeated Violet Beaton. "This is just the time that aunt Alice takes a solemn promenade round the flower-garden. I carry the basket, whilst she cuts the dead leaves from their stalks and otherwise does a little amateur gardening."

"You will let me see you again," Lord Ryvers urged; "you will not refuse?"

"I pass by here often," she answered, "and I shall be glad to see how your picture progresses. If I were in your place, I should devote the morning to getting that sunshine right."

He thought to himself that this the most eventful morning of his life would be spent in dreams of her.

"I am very unwilling to say good morning, Miss Beaton; but I say it, hoping that I may enjoy the happiness of renewing our acquaintance to-morrow."

"I have been happy too," she said; but there was no confusion or embarrassment in his manner. "It is pleasant talking to people of one's own age; they have so much more sympathy than ones elders. I have told you my name," she added suddenly; "if I want to think of your picture and of you, by what name must I remember you?"

After her unexpected denunciation of aristocrats, he dared not tell his name and title, lest she should avoid him in the future.

"My name is Randolph," he answered.

"Good morning then, Mr. Randolph," she said with a bright smile. "Now I go to receive the reprimand of a justly angered aunt."

He watched the pale blue dress as it disappeared amongst the trees.

"To think that I should meet my fate here on a bright June morning?" he said to himself. "Yet love and June and roses seem naturally to go together."

He watched until the last vestige of of the blue dress vanished, then he began to blame himself.

Why had he not said more to her?

Why had he not dared to tell her the first time he saw how well and how dearly he loved her?

And, at least, if he had not gone so far as that, he might have asked her to make an appointment with him.

What if she had gone out of his life, and he should never see her again?

How foolish he had been to let her go!

The only thing left for him was to be sure to be here on the morrow.

As for the future, he did not even care to think of it.

He would leave the painting until another day, when he should be less haunted by that exquisite face.

What was the beauty of sunshine and leaf to him, whose mind was filled with a far lovelier vision?

"I have often wondered whom I should love, where I should see her first, in what guise she would come to me, and how fair she would be," he thought; "and now my questions are all answered at once. I have met her in the grand old woods of St. Byno on the brightest day of the year; and she has come to me in the fairest guise, for she has the loveliest face I have ever seen. How I wish she could have stayed with me a few hours!"

And then he closed the easel and walked down the glade, the words of a quaint old ballad rising to his lips the while.

He trolled them out in a deep clear voice, and seemed to derive wonderful satisfaction from them.

"'Wrong not, sweet mistress of my heart,
The merit of true passion
With thinking that he feels no smart
That sues for no compassion.

"'Silence in love betrays more woe
Than words, though ne'er so witty;
A beggar that is dumb, you know,
May challenge double pity.

"'Then wrong not, dearest to my heart,
My love for secret passion;
He smartest most who hides his smart
And sues for no compassion.'"

Lord Ryvers said to himself that some day, when they were alone in this woodland glade, he would sing that ballad for her.

It said more than he could say, for it told of the silent struggle of deep love to make itself understood.

The only cloud that overshadowed this the fairest dawn of love was that Violet Beaton disliked aristocrats.

He would have to combat that dislike, and make her own that an aristocrat was as good a commoner.

Meanwhile the object of his dreams hastened through the woods, crossed the pretty rustic bridge that spanned the river, opened the garden gate, and looked up with laughing eyes at the tall erect figure awaiting her there.

"Violet," said stern Miss Atherton, "you know that I attend to the garden every day at twelve o'clock; it is now half an hour behind the appointed time. Where have you been?"

The recollection of where she had been, and with whom, and what her aunt would say, if she knew it, brightened the laughing eyes.

"I have been in the woods aunt Alice. I know that I am late, and I am sorry for it. I will make up by working doubly hard now."

Miss Atherton was somewhat mollified, and she said more gently—

"I will overlook it this once, but it must not happen again; duties must be performed first, pleasure is an after-consideration."

So Violet Beaton took the basket obediently, and attended her aunt in her gardening operations.

Miss Alice Atherton was as scrupulous in her garden as in her house; no weeds, no dead leaves, no dying flowers were permitted there.

She was in an unusually vigorous mood this morning; the scissors were in use constantly, and blossom after blossom fell—for she had a great dislike to what she called the untidiness of dying flowers.

"That rose would have lasted another week, aunt," Violet protested, as she watched Miss Atherton snip off a fine damask rose which was a little faded.

"You are here to carry the basket, not to make comments," was Miss Atherton's curt reply.

Violet's thoughts went back to an incident in her childhood.

Miss Atherton had given orders to have the grass on the little lawn mown.

It was studded with white daisies that had been the very pride and delight of the child's heart—wide-open daisies with golden eyes; and, when she saw them cut down by the scythe, she cried bitterly. Miss Atherton was exasperated.

It was bad enough to have a niece; it was worse still to have a niece given to sentimentality.

From that day, when Violet half broke her heart over the dead daisies, Miss Atherton had done all in her power to repress the girl's imagination instead of training it; and the consequence was that it grew under this repression, and not in the healthiest fashion.

It expended itself on idealizing the beautiful things around her.

Strangely enough however, Violet's thoughts had never wandered to the subject of love.

She did not sit by the river, as some girls would have done, and dream of a possible lover, the reason being that she had no young-girl friends, that she had read no love-stories, and very little poetry of a sentimental kind.

She revelled in the pleasures of imagination, she peopled the woods and the glades she saw what was invisible to other eyes; but her thoughts had not yet wandered to the subject of love.

Miss Atherton was passee now, but long years before she had had her romance; she remembered even now the pleasure and the pain of it.

The same pain, she was determined, should never pierce the heart of her niece.

Therefore she carefully selected her friends and supervised the books that she read and the picture she saw; and Violet, at eighteen years of age, was frank, simple, and innocent as a child.

No one ever knew the details of Miss Atherton's love-story.

She had been handsome, once upon a time, with a proud stately beauty.

It was faded now.

Pain had left great lines on her face, had blanched her hair, had taken the light from her eyes, and left her bitter, cold, and proud.

It was generally believed that her great enmity to the aristocracy arose from the fact that she had been cruelly deceived by one of their number.

This was actually the truth.

Miss Atherton had formerly lived as English governess in a family of high position in Rome.

A English nobleman visiting there fell in love with her, and for more than seven years kept up a constant correspondence with her always promising that he would make her his wife when his father died.

When that time came, however, he married a beautiful young heiress, and Miss Atherton found that she had wasted her life youth, and beauty on a dream.

It was this remembrance which made her so bitter as she walked amongst the roses.

She had tried to teach her niece two things; one was to detest the aristocracy of all nations, the other us to live without love.

CHAPTER II.

VIOLET BEATON'S story of her life was very simple.

Doctor Beaton had settled down in the little village of St. Byno's, hoping to do as most other people did there—enjoy a long life.

He married Mary Atherton, whose sister had just come home from Paris, and had taken up her abode in the pretty solitary house known as Acacia Cottage.

The Doctor and his wife had lived very happily; they had had but this one child, Violet.

To the regret of all who knew him, the Doctor died suddenly of a fever, caught from a poor woman whom he was attending.

His young wife did not long survive him.

In these circumstances Miss Atherton could hardly do less than adopt Violet, for so far as she knew, Doctor Beaton had no relatives living, except a young brother who had gone many years before to America.

Miss Atherton had an income of just one hundred pounds per annum, and, by dint of practicing the greatest care and economy she had been able to provide her niece with a home.

It was a picturesque cottage, with beautiful and picturesque surroundings; yet Violet Beaton had not a happy life with the stern, grim lady who had forgotten what youth and beauty and love were like.

"I was handsome once," she said one day, when she found Violet standing before a mirror admiring the shining splendor of her own hair, "and you see what it has come to."

"I should like to be handsome too, aunt," remarked the girl.

"It would make little difference in the end if you were," said Miss Atherton grimly; and Violet, glancing at her aunt shuddered.

Would her own shining, rippling hair, that was like a veil of pure gold, grow white and thin?

Would those beautiful white shoulders become lean and angular, that exquisite face wrinkled and lined?

"I should like best to die young," she thought; "I should not like to grow old and bitter, proud and cold, like my aunt."

Everything that had once been a source of sweetness in Alice Atherton's life had changed to bitterness now.

In that happy long ago, when she had been young and beautiful, and had waited patiently for her happiness, she had loved poetry, music, romance—all that was fair and bright on earth; now, because they had been part and parcel of that old time, she hated them.

As her niece grew more lovely, more imaginative every day, she grew more grim and stern.

She taught Violet to speak French, and she trained the magnificent contralto voice to perfection.

Miss Atherton had other peculiarities. She had lived many years in France, and had her own opinion of the terrible revolution there.

Her sympathies by no means went with the fair-haired aristocrats, who mounted the scaffold with a smile, and so defeated the last would-be triumph of their foes; they were rather with the people who groaned and suffered foiled and died.

She had a most appalling collection of stories, of which the heroes were always aristocrats and villains of the most atrocious kind.

Violet was young and very impressible. On this, the one subject on which Miss Atherton was eloquent, she felt most deeply, and agreed with her.

There was a singular dearth of young people at St. Byno's; the place was so very small.

What Violet said was true—she had never talked to a young man.

The doctor who had succeeded to her father's practice was old; he had a young son whom Violet had seen, but to whom she had never spoken.

He was the only young man belonging to what Miss Atherton called their class; of the class below her she never thought. There had been no break in the monotony of Violet's life.

She had had no holidays, had paid no visits, had made no friends.

The hour she had spent in the bonnie woods of St. Byno's was the happiest in her life.

She had a feeling that she ought to tell her aunt of the new acquaintance she had made; but she knew perfectly well that, if she did so, she would never be allowed to see the young artist or his picture again. So she decided upon not saying anything to her about it.

He would be gone in a few days, and there the matter would end.

"Violet," broke in the stern voice of Miss Atherton, "look where you are going; you almost fall over the stones! You are in dreamland; and, as that is a very bad habit of yours, I should much like to know of what you are thinking."

The knowledge that for the first time in her life she was thinking of a man who was both young and handsome brought a hot flush to the girl's face.

Miss Atherton saw it and stood before her an accusing judge.

"You have some kind of nonsense in your mind child," she declared.

"I fear that is often the case, auntie," her niece replied calmly.

"Remember," said Miss Atherton, raising her forefinger, "there are five pairs of stocking to mend, six kitchen towels to make and mark, and a hamper of fruit to pack for Warwick; now, I ask, have you any time for nonsense?"

"Not one moment aunt," she answered with a merry laugh; but the laugh died away when she entered the house, and found the work ready for her.

They must dine first.

The clock was striking one, and at the precise moment the little maid appeared, carrying in the dinner; and, when the meal was over, Miss Atherton pointed to the pile of work on the side-table.

"That will occupy you until five o'clock, Violet," she said; "then in the cool of the evening you can gather the gooseberries."

So saying, Miss Atherton retired, for, as she had often declared, her constitution required an hour's rest after dinner.

Violet took her favorite spot—the bay-window—where she could see the bridge and the river.

It was a struggle to remain within doors. The river had never looked more beautiful. She could see the great masses of foliage and the sunlit glades of St. Byno's woods. How she longed to be out and away!

Later on in the afternoon, while Miss Atherton still slept and the little maid had gone to the neighboring farmhouse, Violet thought she heard footsteps in the front garden. She listened, but all was silent; and, coming to the conclusion that she must be mistaken, she resumed her work.

Again she heard the unmistakable sound of footsteps and the click of the little gate near the acacia-trees. This time she went to the door. There was no one there; but on the pretty rustic seat of the porch lay a bouquet of flowers and a basket of peaches. On a slip of paper was written, "Sweets to the sweet, flowers to the fair."

Her first impulse was to thank Heaven that her aunt had not seen them. Of course it must be the young artist who had placed them there. What a terrible risk to run! She must hide them, and tell him not to repeat the imprudence.

But that same evening the maid came to her with a letter.

"If you please, miss," she said "a gentleman asked me to give you this. He gave me a shilling to bring you the letter, and two shillings not to tell your aunt."

The note contained a few hurriedly-written lines from the artist, asking her to be so kind as to look at his picture on the morrow. He would be sketching at nine in the morning.

She smiled as she read it—for she could not foresee what was to happen in the future, and she was only eighteen.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Masquerading.

BY HENRY FRITH.

MRS. SYMES SYMINGTON was engaged in smoothing down the nap of her jetty velvet polonaise with her pretty, white, plump hand, on the forefinger of which sparkled a cluster diamond ring, on the third finger of which clung a plain, heavy wedding ring.

She was a plump, rosy little lady, not as tall by a head as the handsome young fellow who called her "mother," and in whom her whole heart's affections were centred, and to whom she was, at this present, administering as severe a reproof as she ever had found occasion to do.

Naughty, headstrong Cleve listened very respectfully, as he leaned his head on his hand and his elbow on the mantelpiece.

With an air that demonstrated the perfect uselessness of the arguments his lady-mother advanced.

Then, when she paused in triumphant breathlessness—breathless because of her long sentences, and triumphant, because she certainly accepted Cleve's silence as the consent she aspired to securing.

After this, Cleve smiled—so sweetly, so coolly, right in her face.

"But I shall marry little Birdie Lorne, mamma, that is, if she will have me.

"Now, don't frown so, you look so much prettier when you smile and blush, little mother.

"Tell me to propose to my little sunny-haired girl and bring her here for the maternal blessing."

He leaned his handsome head towards Mrs. Symington, and looked at her in such a proudly coaxing way that in her fond heart she wondered how any woman could resist him.

Then she shook her head until the diamonds in her ears sent their brilliant coruscations both far and near.

"How can I, Cleve, when I am morally sure Miss Lorne wants your money only?

"A hundred thousand isn't to be secured every day; and to marry for money is to perfectly miserable.

"I married for money, Cleve, and you know the life I led until your father died.

"You are my only comfort—don't pain me by bringing home a wife who will only endure us for the sake of what we can give her."

Evidently she had forgotten her mental decision that no girl with a human heart could resist her boy's handsome face.

Certainly it was very unlike the proud, self-assured Mrs. Symes Symington to underrate her own importance so tremendously, as she had just done.

But then, even the richest, proudest, and haughtiest people have their other side that only a few friends know; and this was Mrs. Symington's other side.

She watch Cleve's face anxiously, but there was no sign of change of views in the gay, debonair face, with the contradicting eyes so grave and sternly decided.

"You mistake Birdie altogether, mother dear.

"How can it be possible she wants me for my money when lots of other fellows are after hers?

"She is an heiress in her own right—forty or fifty thousand."

Mrs. Symington opened her bright, black eyes.

"Oh! Is that the case? Well——"

Her altered tone, her hesitating words, so delightfully emphasized, were enough for Cleve.

He caught her up in his arms, regardless of her elegant toilet, and kissed her until her face was as scarlet as a girl's.

"Cleve! are you not ashamed of yourself?

"Put me down this minute, or—or—or—you shan't marry Bird——"

He dropped her instantly.

"You're down, mother; and in just one hour prepare to see my little darling—all blushes, dimples, smiles, and sweetness."

He went out rather hurriedly, caught his hat from the rack and hailed a passing car that would speed him on his mission.

Mrs. Symington watched him between the plume-colored damask curtains, her eyes kindling with pleasurable, pardonable pride.

"The dear boy! he wants me to think I settled the matter he arranged long ago.

"Of course he would have married her, anyway, but just to think how splendidly he has behaved to me."

And something very like the diamonds in her ears glittered in her fond mother eyes as she turned away.

* * * * * *

A delightful little octagonal room, hung with the exact shade of dainty pink silk that was most becoming to Birdie Lorne's fair complexion.

A pink carpet that covered the floor in an unbroken expanse of velvet.

Chairs, ottomans, and cushions upholstered in pink and ebony.

With little lace tidies, and snowy, sephyr mats scattered gracefully around; with elegantly-designed and executed afghans on the ottoman and sofas.

Lace curtains and pink satin drapery; with the white walls hung with small, rare paintings, with statuettes on pedestals in every available niche.

A charming, girlishly-ordered room, that opened from the back drawing-room by one door and into the beautiful conservatory by another.

A place where tears and trouble ought never to have come, and the sight of both of which uncanny visitants made Cleve Symington pause a second on the threshold, as he caught a glimpse of a golden head buried in two tiny fair hands, and heard the unmistakable sobs that shook the little white-robed figure crouching in a heap beside a low hassock.

He only hesitated a second, then, with a look of tenderest love, pity, and sympathy, crossed the room to her side.

"Birdie, not crying so piteously. Can I sympathize, or do I intrude?"

She sprang up in a sweet, shy surprise, her face all tear-flushed, her eyes as bright as dewdrops.

She was one of those Heaven-favored mortals that weeping beautifies.

She only looked fresher, and fairer, and so pitiful, and Cleve's arms fairly ached to take her to his heart and kiss her tears away.

And he would, he vowed, rapturously in another five minutes.

She took her handkerchief from her pocket—a little lace affair, white and fragrant, and essayed to smile as she wiped the tears from her lashes.

"I am afraid I appear very childish, Mr. Symington—but when I think—when it is all gone——"

Her exquisite lips quivered again, but she checked the rebellious tears bravely.

"I am as poor as a church-mouse—that is all.

"A letter from my guardian says everything was invested in a mining company, and the shares are not worth the paper they were printed on."

Cleve fairly worshipped her then, as she honestly explained her position, with the quiet, ladylike way so natural to her.

"It is a fortune, I admit; and yet, Birdie, there will inevitably come one good of it—you will learn who are your real friends."

Somehow he said it so very earnestly that Birdie glanced curiously at him, then drooped her eyes under the blue-veined, long-lashed lids.

Cleve was close by her side the next instant, with her hands imprisoned in his, and his impassioned eyes fairly scorching her face.

"You surely understand me, darling?

"You will let me prove my friendship, my love, my adoration?

"Little girl, say you will be my own. Tell me you love me, and promise me the great privilege of caring for you forever, my little wife."

It was so sweet, this manly, honest, eager avowal, and coming, as it did, on the very heels of her misfortune, and from the lips of the only lover she ever had prayed to hear the words from.

And yet—oh, woman's foolish pride!—all her perverse little heart rose in rebellion at accepting everything and giving nothing.

It never should be said of Birdie Lorne that she took the first offer she received after her misfortune simply because there was money in it.

So—while Cleve waited, smiling patiently at her bowed head, never doubting that his whole earthly happiness was just at hand, dreaming such rapid, blissful dreams of the future, Birdie deliberately made up her stubborn will, through horrid pangs of pain.

Then she lifted her head in a quick, haughty way that it had often delighted in before.

"You are so kind, Mr. Symington, and I appreciate every word you say, and will remember you gratefully to my dying day.

"But I will marry no man to whom I would have to feel under such obligations as I would feel to you."

She spoke gently, but with a proud ring to her voice.

Cleve reeled under the sharp sudden blow.

He clenched her hands so tightly that her rings cut in the tender flesh, but she only compressed her lips and made no sign of how he hurt her.

"But, Birdie," and there was such agony in his voice that her own heart quailed a second, "Birdie, don't speak of obligations to man who loves as I do; speak as if you knew you would grace a queen's throne, as you would.

"Birdie, Birdie, don't be so cruel to me."

Her lips quivered, and her eyes overflowed suddenly.

"You mean what you say, my friend, I know. Or, rather, you think you mean it, which is the same to me, since I cannot accept it.

"But, you are only pitiful, kind, and sympathetic, and the sight of my tears and grief has touched your great heart. That is all."

She drew her hands away from his, softly.

"It is not all. I love you——"

Then, something in her imperious face made him suddenly desist, and by the way she looked and acted, Cleve Symington knew she was desperately in earnest, she would not marry him, because she was so proud.

And he went sadly away, feeling numb and stupefied, as he walked home in a strange, dazed way that his fond mother saw, from her peeping place between the curtains; and her own face lost all its matronly bloom as Cleve came in, whiter than death itself, and threw himself on the sofa.

Then, when he had told her, between spasms of pain that forced him to lie speechless, the rosy flush crept softly back and into the eyes fairly radiated a happy, hopeful light.

"Try to bear it, my boy," she said, gently. "You have proved what a noble woman she is, if nothing more."

Then she when out, smiling to herself.

* * * * * *

A plain, large room, on the second story, that bore evidences of very recent furnishing, in the new, cheap carpet on the floor, in the homely chairs and table.

Before the small, mahogany-framed looking-glass that hung between the windows, Mrs. Symes Symington was tying her bonnet-strings—narrow black strings to a black straw bonnet, trimmed with Quaker plainness—that compared suitably with her black alpaca dress and dull plaid shawl.

She smiled at her reflection, then glanced down at her unaccustomed toilet.

"I think I shall be successful—I will be successful, for my boy's sake.

"The sight of his patient, pale face will inspire me to any degree, and if Miss Lorne is the woman I take her to be, she will prove it before an hour passes over our heads.

"Since her descent into poverty—genteel ladylike poverty, however—I learn she passes this house every day at twelve o'clock, and takes her dinner at the restaurant several doors below; so if I intend to meet her, I had better be going."

She locked the door, put the key in her pocket, and went down the stairs into the street—exactly in time; for a slight, graceful figure, clad in gray twill, passed quietly by, and into the restaurant.

She knew it was Birdie Lorne, as well as Cleve would have known it, although she had never seen her before.

She walked calmly into the restaurant, and took a seat at the same table with the pretty, high-bred girl.

The place was nearly full, and Mrs. Symington was glad it was.

All at once, as if suddenly impressed with the idea, Mrs. Symington looked curiously in Birdie's face.

"I beg pardon, but are you not Miss Lorne? I am quite sure you must be the young lady my son speaks about so often."

There was something so kindly genial in the air that Birdie did not resent it.

"Your son? I certainly am Miss Lorne; but you have the advantage of me."

"I am Cleve Symington's mother, dear. There, forgive me, but you see I knew all about it. I am so thankful to have met you quite providentially."

Birdie blushed now—as much in surprise as anything else; and involuntarily she glanced at the plain, unfashionable attire.

"You understand? We have been as unfortunate as yourself, Miss Lorne. Everything is gone and Cleve goes out—actually goes out every day."

"Poor fellow. Is—is he well?"

"Oh, yes, perfectly well, and as brave as a lion; only—forgive me, dear—only hopelessly cast down, on your account. I am his mother, and to you, the only girl he ever loved, I say, he loves with you an affection that will never abate."

"And I love him, dear Mrs. Symington—I did then, only, somehow, I couldn't say so."

And Birdie poured out her whole heart, completely conquered and wrote a letter to Cleve Symington.

Then she kissed the mother.

"I am so thankful we met strangely, and I am so glad you live in this poor, plain little place—I love you better for it, I know.

"And when my bills are all paid for the music I teach, at the end of a quarter, why—why if Cleve will want me so soon, we'll get pleasanter rooms, and we'll be so happy."

* * * * *

"My darling, you don't regret marrying a poor man, and having to live in a suite of rooms?

"Look up, Birdie, and tell me, little wife."

She looked merrily up in his eyes, the wife of six hours, as the two sat in the sunny little room after they had been married, and where Birdie had lived since the shares failed her.

"Sorry? Oh, Cleve, when I think how thankful I am, and how nobly you have endured your sudden loss of fortune, and how happy we will be—why, where has mother gone?"

Cleve laughed as he drew her head to his shoulder and smoothed her hair.

"I am inclined to be jealous of mother, who I think has gone to the—gone back home, to prepare a homely little dinner for us."

"Let us go now, dear. Don't scold because I ordered a carriage, will you? Mrs. Estler paid me in full this morning."

Cleve bit his lip to hide a laugh, then gravely escorted his bride down to the single-horsed vehicle in waiting.

The man knew his route, and dashed off rapidly stopping only when he reached the kerb in front of a large house.

Cleve looked at Birdie in astonishment.

She laughed nervously, then began to cry.

"You're not angry, dear? I didn't know until a month ago that it was all right. I only lost a thousand, after all. Cleve, for your sake, and mother's I am so happy."

He kissed her almost solemnly as they sat in the little carriage.

"My own true, unselfish little darling!"

They entered, found a delicious little dinner in readiness, and no one to mar the sweetness of the surprise.

Late in the evening, towards ten o'clock, Birdie rung for her wraps.

"Mother will be waiting for us. Come, Cleve, let's go after her, and bring her here home."

So they drove off, though so many streets that Birdie wondered where in the world they were going to.

"Darling," Cleve said, abruptly, "shall I confess? Shall I tell you I have a surprise for you equal to your own? Look out!"

She looked out, as the carriage stopped at the Symington mansion. An awning was stretched from the door to the carriage-mount, and a velvet carpet was spread for her feet.

The joyous music of the band, the flitting of elegantly dressed ladies past the windows—it rushed over her like a flood.

Cleve had been masquerading for very love of her.

"You forgive me?"

He looked at her with his splendid eyes all alight.

"Oh, Cleve, how could I help it? How you must have loved me!"

He escorted her in, proudly; and Mrs. Symington, in velvet and diamonds, met them at the entrance.

"Birdie—daughter!"

And all went merry as a marriage bell.

Bric-a-Brac.

THE various swords which have been presented to the General Banks, the Federal commander, are valued at $20,000.

WHAT PARIS ATE.—Paris last year ate 6,000,000 chickens and 250,000,000 eggs. The frogs couldn't be counted. To wash down these and other kinds of solid food 1,000,000 gallons of wine was used.

A LANDSCAPE IN INSECTS.—At the Parisian Palais d'Industrie is a landscape executed in European and foreign insects. The foreground is composed of 45,000 coleoptera, the remainder of the picture being formed of over 4,000 varieties of the insect tribe, which supply every tone requisite for the landscape. The completion of the work occupied the artist four years.

CLAY, CICERO, AND COLUMBUS.—A number of years ago Henry Clay was presented with a cane. The staff is of live oak, cut from a tree that overshadowed the tomb of Cicero, and the head is made of yard antique obtained from the house of Columbus, at Genoa. It is octagonal, and ornamented with exquisite medallions of these two famous orators of ancient and modern times—Rome's Cicero and America's Clay.

A WONDERFUL WATER CLOCK.—Haroun al Raschid, the principal hero of the "Arabian Nights Entertainments," sent to Charlemagne, in the eighth century, a water clock, in the dial of which a door opened at each hour, and when at noon the twelve doors were thrown open, as many knights on horseback issued forth, paraded round the dial, and, then returning, shut themselves in again.

100 YEARS.—How the world has progressed within a century! George Washington, the first president of the United States, never saw a steamboat. John Adams, the second president of the United States, never saw a railroad. Andrew Jackson, the seventh president, knew nothing about the telegraph. Abraham Lincoln, the sixteenth president, never dreamed of such a thing as the telephone.

THE RIGHT TO VOTE.—The Kabyles of Africa have a singular manner of deciding the right to vote on the attainment of the individual majority. A thread is measured off which, when doubled, will exactly encircle the neck. The thread, made single, is then passed from the occipital base of the head over the cranium, and when the other end reaches only to the chin the development of the head is supposed to be complete and the individual to be politically mature. This ordinarily happens about the age of fourteen.

ESQUIMAUX DOGS.—However useful they may be, Arctic dogs seem to be deficient in that affectionate disposition which endears their species so much to man. Captain Hamilton stated at a recent meeting of the royal Geographical Society that he believed the Esquimaux dogs to be the most ungrateful creatures in creation. He had traveled for several hundred miles by sledge, and for six weeks it was his duty regularly to feed the dogs; but, after only a few weeks' absence, on the conclusion of the journey, they would not recognize him in the slightest degree.

THE RECONCILIATION.

BY. A. C.

Oh, would not the heart that loves thee to madness,
Oh, turn not in anger thy sweet face away;
Pause ere you leave me, oh, think of my sadness,
If love you once cherished, now from me should stray.
Oh, chase from thy brow the frown that there lingers,
Oh, banish all doubt of my truth from thy heart;
Tear not away from my hand thy fair fingers,
Oh, pause ere you bid me for ever depart.

Oh, think of the moments together we've wandered,
With hand clasp'd in hand, each glance a love token;
Think, when in absence, how sweetly we've pondered
O'er hopes we have cherish'd — vows we have spoken.
Oh, rapture, the tear-drop that fringes thy lashes,
Tells this bounding bosom thy heart doth relent.
Once more in thy blue eyes the true love-light flashes,
And sighs speak how truly your doubts you repent.

Once more to my heart those strong arms enfold thee:
Once more to thy lips love's pure kisses I press;
Yes, to my warm, beating heart do I hold thee,
And win back thy love in returning caress.
Now, while our bosoms responsive are beating,
While hand graspeth hand, and heart yearneth to heart,
Say thou'll be mine, and love never more fleeting
Shall join us together till death doth us part.

TWICE MARRIED.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE NEMESIS OF LOVE," "BARBARA GRAHAM," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXV.—[CONTINUED.]

I AM ready to hear what you have to say," he remarked, calmly, and with a certain dignity, far more imposing than his former violence.

"I will not interrupt you, but be as brief as you can."

"That's something like," said Hugh. "Now, the matter is soon settled. I want something that you can give—money and a wife; you want what I can give—secrecy, freedom, and—well, well, I won't anger you.

"You see, Mr. Evan, I have the offer of a share in a first-rate concern in Manchester.

"I want three thousand pounds to enable me to take it, and that amount you must find.

"Nay, hear me out; I am willing to take your engagement to pay me that sum on your marriage, or three months after; and I promise, on my part, perfect secrecy and no further molestation or threats, and to free you from the bond that hangs round your neck, and keeps you in as deep water as you fished the young lady from the other day.

"After all, 'tis no unequal bargain, as you can see."

"Demon! tempter!" rose to Evan's lips; but he did not speak the words.

He was master of himself now; no: rather a slave to selfish interest and passion. The very slavery chained his speech.

"I cannot trust you," he said, quietly; "you promise what you have no power to perform. Miss Herbert would never consent."

"She will, never fear," said the man; "and if that is the only difficulty, I'll insert a clause not to demand the money till that condition is fulfilled, and the girl safely away from Llanover."

"But there must be no constraint, no compulsion," said Evan.

"She shall accompany me of her own free will," was the reply.

"As your wife?" said Evan.

"Do you think she would go in any other way?" asked the man, with a hateful smile.

There was another pause.

All the arguments that the arch-enemy of man conjures up to tempt him to his ruin on any occasion like the present, when the question of good or evil hangs on the decision of a moment, recurred to Evan's mind.

Winifred would be safe, prosperous, nay, rich; doubtless tolerably happy, for the man evidently loved her, and would be proud of his delicate bride.

Such a fate was better than to be the wife of a man who chafed at the fetters, poor, morose, possibly disgraced, ruined—nay, worse.

Evan, for her sake, thought it better to force her to her own good, however sharp the wrench from old ties, old love; it would be madness to hesitate, absolute madness, injustice to her and ruin to himself. No, the thing must be done, and at once.

"There is justice in what you say, Evans," he replied; "and though, mind you, I admit nothing of the allegations you have made, I am content to confess that there are, there have been occurrences between Miss Herbert and myself, that would make her prosperous and happy marriage with some one else very agreeable to me, and for her sake, as well as yours, I am happy to do anything to assist your future career."

"In plain words, you consent?" said the man.

Evan bowed his head; he could not speak the assent.

"Very well," said Evans. "I will draw up the agreement, and, if convenient, will see you again to-morrow night. But, how about witnesses?"

Evan thought for a moment, then replied quickly, "My own old servant, and Jenkins, at 'The Harp and Fiddle,' that will do, and one of his servants.

"We can meet there the day after to-morrow; and, hark ye, Evans, nothing must be done till Miss Herbert is well again. At least a week, or say a fortnight, from this time must elapse before you appear in Llanover again."

"Say a month, if you like," returned Evans; "I am in no hurry.

"I have waited these three years, and I can afford as many weeks.

"Besides, I have plenty to arrange before I take home my wife.

"The day after to-morrow I'll be at 'The Harp and Fiddle,' and then I'm off to Manchester for at least three weeks. Good night Mr. Evan.

"I thought we should understand one another at last.

"Glad to come to a better arrangement than threatened at first; always like to keep my friends."

With the same sneering-smile with which he had enraged his young patron during the interview, the overlooker departed, and Evan remained for a few minutes thoughtful and gloomy.

Then, shaking off the uneasy remorse that he could not altogether smother, he hastily left the room, and joined the gay party in the drawing-room.

Evan was unusually attentive to Laura that night, and the girl retired to her bed full of rosy visions for the future that colored her very dreams.

CHAPTER XXVI.

SINCE that wretched night when Evan Lloyd had become acquainted with his father's weakness, he had dared to despise him in his heart.

The erring, the sinful one, added to his other misdeeds the crying one of regarding with contempt and almost hatred the noble old man who had only failed in a parent's duty from over affection and indulgence. Yes, it was a species of dislike, disgust, that the young man cherished towards his father.

He dreaded above all things that the Count or Laura should discover Sir William's frailty, and every time that they were brought in contact, he was nervous, and uneasy, and irritable to a degree he could scarcely conceal.

He only wished that the old man would entirely absent himself from the family circle, and bury himself and his infirmities in perfect seclusion.

Besides, he had a real disgust for the vice itself.

He was a man of iron will and intense selfishness, his very ambition perhaps lifted him above the more degrading and minor vices.

He was one to commit crimes, and fall into foibles—a hard, strong character, who brooked nothing, and spared no one who came in the way of his indomitable will.

It was the morning after his interview with the overlooker, and Evan was sitting in the morning room with Laura, reading to her as she pretended to work, and more often dropping the book, and gazing into her downcast face, and idly talking in the sweet, disconnected way peculiar to lovers, acknowledged or unacknowled.

The girl was still languid, and had excused herself from a long drive which Paul and Lucy and Lady Lloyd were taking, and Evan remained at home to "amuse her."

There was no coquetry, no pride now in Laura's manner to her lover.

All was gentleness and worship.

It was now her duty, she thought, and she yielded herself to its sweetness without a struggle.

And yet Evan as yet kept half aloof from her love and her gratitude.

He did not tease or evade her as formerly but no open declaration passed his lips, and yet she was content, confident that the proof he had given her of his love was sufficient, and that it was to enjoy this sweet dreamy state the longer that he deferred speaking only.

Evan enjoyed this state of things, this freedom and necessity for a proposal that he was resolved not to make save in his own time and place, and it was pleasant to sit by her, and see the utter objection love had made of her pride, to hear it in the soft tones of her voice, and read it in the timid glances of her eyes, for an all-absorbing vanity formed one trait of his character.

Laura had been more than usually gentle that morning, and Evan more than usually devoted, while yet keeping safely clear from a word that could commit him.

Both had been silent for a few moments, a delicious pause, when Laura at last felt, with all the pure sweetness of true love, the charm of the very presence of the beloved one.

Suddenly the door opened, and Sir William Lloyd entered.

He had not appeared before that morning and fancied that the whole party were gone on the expedition planned on the previous evening.

In a moment the son noticed the wildness of his eye and the staggering feebleness of his walk, and he felt certain that his father was already under the influence of his besetting sin.

The idea maddened him.

He started up from Laura's side, and advanced to Sir William, demanding angrily what he wanted.

The look, the gesture, were well understood by the unhappy baronet, who was in truth suffering from one of the painful attacks of nervousness and extreme prostration which are the penalty of this peculiar foible, and which so often act as the most terrible temptation for its repeated indulgence.

The tears rushed to his eyes, and with a look that went to Laura's heart, he tottered from the room.

Evan shut the door, and returned to Laura's side.

"How could you speak so to your father?" she said reproachfully. "It would break my heart."

"You don't understand, you cannot," he replied.

"He had no right to come like that. I will allow no man, if he were ten times more dear to me than my father, to degrade me."

Laura rose, and moved a step with her old proud air, saying, "I do not understand you, Mr. Lloyd.

"But I know your father seemed ill, and if you will not go to him, I must."

Evan colored violently under the pointed rebuke of the woman who a moment before had been his devoted worshipper.

"Miss de St. Hilaire," he said, "pardon me, but you are no judge in this matter. Every house has its skeleton; you have obtained a glimpse of ours."

"Go, Evan, and beg his pardon," said Laura.

The tone, the name was sweet, but he could not yield.

"I!" said he; "no—never!"

"I say yes," returned Laura. "You are brave and strong; be generous and gentle.

"I cannot bear to think of you as less generous, less noble than I thought. It disturbs me."

The right chord was touched.

He also was disturbed, to sink in her opinion.

He kissed her hand, whispered she was an angel, and went to the library, not to apologise, but to upbraid and threaten.

"Father," he began, "what means this? Are you utterly lost to shame, that you—a Lloyd—expose yourself to the child of your old friend—the guest of your house?"

"I—I did not know you were there, Evan," said Sir William, looking sadly at his son.

"But why, in the name of Heavens, do you degrade yourself and me like this?" continued Evan.

"Can you not keep from that wretched bottle, and at this hour in the morning?"

"Hush, Evan, hush!" said the old man, with some remains of dignity. "Beware, my son, for the curse is sure to fall on him that honoreth not his father."

"This is folly—delirium!" exclaimed Evan, impatiently.

"It is unbearable to be taunted by a father who——"

"Silence, boy! you know not what you are saying—what you are doing."

"I know that it is impossible to talk with a man in your present state, sir," replied Evan, sullenly.

"Boy, you know not what you are saying," retorted Sir William.

"I am sober—sober as yourself, and (God help me!) with a conscience far more tender than yours.

"Were I hardened and strong in vice, I should not be the miserable wretch I am—brought to destruction by my own son."

"By me, sir!" exclaimed Evan, starting.

"You are now either mad or drunk to say that.

"I was hundreds of miles from home when that fatal habit which brings disgrace on us all was begun."

"True, boy, true! You were far away, and yet it was you—yes, Satan, in the form of my own son's deed—that drove me to it."

The baronet spoke loud and full, and Evan shuddered under that half wild, half reproving tone and eye.

"Hush, sir," said he. "You are not yourself—you are excited. She will hear. Be quiet."

"Quiet?" repeated his father. "It is but one thing that makes me quiet—the very thing that is my perdition—drink!"

"Then, for Heaven's sake, drink!" exclaimed Evan, terrified lest Laura should hear the voice, and come to offer help.

"Coward—fond!" cried Sir William, starting up wildly, "it is not my son my Gwendaline's child that speaks; it is a demon incarnate to tempt me."

"Father, father, in mercy compose yourself!" cried the young man, now really terrified.

"What if the servants should hear you?"

"Hear me denounce my own son!" he exclaimed. "No, no one will ever do that. God only, and one other, know anything about it."

"About what, sir?" demanded Evan.

"Why, about that which drove me to drink," he replied; "when conscience warred against a father's love, and justice pulled one way and human frailty another:—then, then, boy, I drowned the agony and the conflict in the poison that kills body and soul.

"Now do you understand?"

"Once more, what does all this mean?" hissed Evan between his teeth.

"You will know, then?" cried the baronet.

"Yes, yes," replied Evan, hastily.

"Come here, then," said his father. "But you must not hear in words—no, not in words.

"It would kill me to speak my son's guilt; and besides, others might hear. Now, look!"

He tottered to an old escritoire, and opened a drawer with a spring that Evan could not detect.

Then he drew from it what appeared the most common objects that could be displayed to view.

But Evan turned deadly pale, and sank on the nearest chair, while Sir William replaced them, and once more closed the drawer.

"Father," whispered the young man, "can I trust you?"

The answer was so low that none else could hear, and then Evan hurried from the room, but he did not return to his old post by Laura's side for half an hour after, and even then his face was pale, and his manner absent and constrained.

But the girl loved him better for it; it betokened, as she thought, anxiety and love for the stricken parent whose ill health she so commiserated.

CHAPTER XXVII.

DAYS passed on, and Evan once more visited, and was received as of old, at the farmhouse.

And his old manner to Winifred seemed to return, half imperious, half loving, and the girl exulted in the sweet tyranny that seemed to speak of the tie between them, and began to bloom once more into health and cheerfulness, and to look like the Winifred of old times.

Laura was not surprised at his visits, for he always managed that she should herself urge him to inquire after the invalid, and his feigned reluctance only added to her eagerness that he should take her message grateful anxiety for the sweet girl who saved her life.

She would gladly have gone herself, but Evan truly assured her that Winifred shrank from an interview with strangers, and, with the shyness of a secluded life, felt a reluctance to meet even the expression of a gratitude that was her due.

It really was so.

The very idea of meeting that brilliant rival filled Winifred with terror.

The sound of carriage wheels chased the color from her cheek, and the approach of any unknown footstep made her start and look involuntarily from some way of escape.

But they never had an opportunity of being alone since the accident, for the old people seemed jealous of trusting their recovered treasure out of their sight now that they had so nearly lost her.

One evening, however, Evan left the party at the Grange on some excuse, and went down to the farm.

He learnt from Winifred that her father and mother were going on that day to a harvest supper at the next farm, and he knew she would be alone and uninterrupted.

How the girl's face brightened and the delicate cheek flushed as he entered, and clasping her in his arms, he pressed her upturned lips with something like his old tenderness.

And then he sat down in the large cushioned chair sacred to the farmer alone, and Winifred drew a large ottoman of her own work to his side, and crouched at his feet with the love and confidence of a child.

It was a temper that well suited Evan, and he loved her perhaps as well at that moment as in the first heat of passion.

He knew how she loved him.

He could bring smiles and tears at will on that lovely face.

He might forsake, trample on her, and she would forgive and love him still.

And there she sat, the soft eyes turned up, and the arm resting on his knee, with all the charm of childhood, and yet the loving devotion of a woman in her heart.

At last a shadow crept over that sweet face and she shuddered.

"What is it? What ails my Winny?" he asked.

"That day, that dreadful water," she replied. "You left me alone, Evan—alone to die."

He frowned, changed in a moment, and said, "Is this your faith, Winifred Herbert?"

"Hush!" she said; "never call me by that name when we are alone."

Evan's frown deepened, he drew away his arm for a second, but again he changed and then clasped her closer to him.

"Well, well," said he, "be it so, little wife."

She sprang to his arms, and buried her face in his bosom, and nestled to his heart like a dove.

"Yes, Winifred, it is a sweet word," he said; "some day it will be yours."

"And you will never, never pain me so again?" she said. "But you did not mean it—you only wanted to try me—to see if I could keep our secret. Was it not so, dear Evan?"

"Yes, yes; I wanted to try you," he replied.

"And you are satisfied now," said Winifred, "for when you left me to die——"

"Stop, stop, child!" he exclaimed, "do not say that again; I thought it was you. How could I tell in the water? You wrong me, Winifred."

"Ah, yes, I see it now," she said. "How selfish, how wicked of me to suspect you!—but I was so wretched, so jealous, Evan! Oh, may you never know such misery as mine during that dreadful time!"

"Well, well, dearest, don't let us speak of it," said Evan. "We will have no more of these scenes.

"You know that I did not mean anything and I am sure you will keep our secret."

"See how I have kept it," said the poor trusting girl.

"And always will," said Evan. "I can trust you now, Winny. You will not disobey me?"

"No, no; you are my husband," she retorted, trembling and blushing as the word passed her lips; "and I must obey you. My mother obeys my father next to God, and next to God I will pay duty to you, so long as life lasts."

Evan still held her close to his heart.

He loved her—who could help it?—loved her with a far tenderer, softer, more enduring love than he bestowed even in his most infatuated moments on the brilliant French girl.

There was a feminine delicacy, a gentle reticence in Winifred's character which had a peculiar charm when contrasted with the energy and reckless frankness of Laura's, and which called forth a widely distinct feeling.

One was admiration—dazzled, mad devotion.

The other, deep, tender, fostering love. For a few brief moments they sat in silent blissful enjoyment of pure, innocent, mutual love, and the demon of ambition and worldly pride passed away from the sweet angel presence for a time—but only for a time.

The striking of the clock which warned the young pair of the probable return of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert, recalled to Evan the main object of his visit.

"Winny," he whispered, "I doubt not your love nor your faith; both have been too surely proved; but—but——"

"But what, dear Evan? you have some doubt still; do not fear to tell me; I can soon charm it away," said the young creature, looking in his face with that Madonna like look that rebuked the secret purpose of his heart, and made him quail before its very gentleness.

"Darling, pardon me," said he; "but there are circumstances, emergencies, that may arise before our present unfortunate separation can cease, that might too severely test your noble self-devotion.

"Will you not consent to a simple expedient for saving yourself and me from so serious a misfortune?"

She looked half wondering, half frightened, as she repeated—"Misfortune?"

"Yes, Winny, misfortune," he replied; "for it would inevitably divide us for ever. If there should be any premature disclosure, we should never meet again.

"Can you wonder if I am anxious to guard you even from involuntary weakness or imprudence?"

"I can hardly fancy anything more trying than what I have borne already," replied Winifred, with some dignity in the tacit reproach; "but go on, Evan: what more do you wish?"

"Merely a more solemn form of promise than a mere assurance on your part, Winny—an oath."

"Oh, Evan!" she exclaimed, starting from his arms: "it is so awful to take an oath."

"Not if you are really sincere in your promise, Winny," he replied.

"It is but a more solemn and binding affirmation, and if you refuse to take it, I can only suppose you were not honest in your intention to keep your word at all hazards."

Winifred turned pale.

Brought up as she had been with primitive strictness, there was something mysterious and terrible in the very idea of an oath, associated only with the most important and fearful transactions of justice, or with the most reprobate among mankind. And yet her husband, whom she had just declared was absolute master of her actions, required her to take this solemn form of words in her lips on pain of doubting the honesty and sincerity of her professions and promises.

It was a terrible trial for the poor girl.

"Listen, Winny," he continued, in the same persuasive tones; "I must have obedience or nothing.

"If you distrust me, I am not fit to be your husband, and no power on earth should make me claim you for my wife; no, not if you had the wealth of the Indies. So, choose: will you be guided by me in your duty and your safeguard, or will you take your own opinion, and let our connection be as if we had never been aught but friends?"

There was a short pause.

Winifred trembled violently, and her cheek was ashy pale, but she did not speak a word.

"I see," said Evan, rising; "you are either too wilful or too distrustful to comply. Farewell, Winifred; may you never repent your obstinacy."

He turned to the door, and she sprang after him with a wild cry.

"Evan! Evan! forgive me, and I will do all you wish; I cannot bear you to leave me in anger."

He turned round slowly, and with apparent reluctance.

"Are you sincere, Winifred?—are you really willing to give yourself up to my guidance?" he asked.

"Yes, yes, in all things," she replied; "only love me as you used to do, and I will obey you as your wife, your slave; I cannot live without you."

"Then, Winifred, repeat what I tell you," said Evan. "Put your hands in mine and promise before God, who is our only witness, never to tell any living mortal, till I give you permission, that we are man and wife."

The poor girl turned very white, and her voice faltered as she murmured the words in scarcely audible tones.

But they were spoken, and Evan's fears from that moment were set at rest. The doom of that gentle girl was sealed.

"I shall see you again soon, dearest," he said; "and now all doubt and suspicion must vanish, and the smiles come back to my little wife's lips as they were wont."

Would that "little wife" ever smile with the light-hearted joyousness of former days? Time alone would show.

* * * * * *

Evan mounted the horse that had been tied up in the old stable at the farmhouse, and rode slowly towards his home; but his thoughts were far away, and the gloom fast deepening, and as he passed the spot where the roads diverged to the Grange, and the church and parsonage, he unconsciously took the wrong turning, and went on for some minutes without perceiving his mistake.

The sudden obscurity of the way however recalled him to himself, and looking up, he perceived that he was close on one of the entrances to the wood, though he could not in the gloom tell the precise spot.

A slow footstep, and an indistinct object near him, told of the neighborhood of some human being or animal, and checking his horse to a yet slower pace, he approached the form, which he now perceived was a man slowly walking along the path.

"Halloo! Can you tell me which of the paths to the wood I am in?" he asked. "I have missed my way."

"Evan," said a familiar voice, "is it you?—and asking that question in your native place. That is strange."

"Father, you out at this hour! What means this?" said the young man, sharply.

"It means good, I hope, my son," was the meek reply. "I have sought God in this wide earth, in this free air, and in the works of His hands.

"The house seemed to choke me: the atmosphere of that fatal room was poison to me.

"And to-night, Evan, I heard the organ playing in the old church, and its windows were lighted up, and the music and the voice of prayer seemed to call me to better feelings than I have known since, since——"

"Hush!" said Evan, sternly: "not a word of that, as you value—"

"Well, well; but listen, boy, listen," said the baronet, hurriedly. "I could hear the words of Charles Thornton's text, and it said, as if addressed to me and you, 'Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.' Evan, I listened, and my brain seemed cooler, and a horrid weight was lifted from my head, and I saw that there was mercy for you and me."

"This is raving!" muttered Evan, impatiently.

But he dared not risk what might drive his father to desperation, and for the moment he restrained his fiery temper, and listened to what more might be in the old man's heart.

"And Evan," he continued, "I went to the parsonage when the sermon was ended, and I saw the true servant of God, and I asked him—"

"You dared to break your promise—to tell your raving fancies to that hypocrite!" exclaimed Evan, leaping from his horse, and clutching the old man's arm. "Speak, lest I add—"

"Silence, boy!" said the old man, sternly, and standing calm and still under the rude grasp; "you ought to know me better. If you are lost to natural affection, I am not. Your secret is safe."

"Say rather your wild visions, sir," retorted Evan. "I plead guilty to no secret; but, be quick if you have more to say; I want to get home."

"I fear it avails little," said his father, sadly. "The atonement which I would make for the sin which I have not courage to reveal, would, I fear, not be shared by you, any more than the remorse that has driven me to destruction—the very verge of ruin of body and soul."

"Then you exchange folly for treason," said Evan. "You would atone for supposed guilt by denouncing your only son—is that it?"

"No, my boy; only in my prayers would I confess your sin with my own. Don't be afraid, my son."

"Afraid!" sneered Evan; "I know not the word; or do I dread aught but the ravings of intoxication."

"Evan, I shudder to hear you," said his father; "God knows the truth, and hears you adding sin to sin."

"Then, He knows, Sir William, that your brain is crazed with strong drink, or worse, and has been so for many months," said Evan.

The old man relaxed his hold upon his son, and sank tottering against a tree, while Evan mounted his horse, and rode rapidly away.

"Atonement!" he muttered; "the man is mad or drunk to think of such a thing—atonement to the d——. Bah, I'll not think of it."

The father leant against the tree, his hands clasped together, and his eyes fixed on vacancy.

The blow appeared to have stunned him—the bitter words had entered his very soul.

"Too much," he muttered, "too much. The devil has conquered—my better angel has left me. Oh, my God! have mercy on me, for I am brought to the edge of the bottomless pit, and my own son's hand is extended against me."

The fevered brain perhaps scarcely comprehended the full import of the words, a vague sense of horror and helplessness possessed him, and he put up that prayer which is never disregarded—the cry of the humble penitent for help and mercy.

A gentle hand was presently laid on his arm.

The moon broke out at the moment, and revealed the sweet, pitying face of his wife.

The earnest, loving look—the very dress, reminded him of old days, for, in her haste she had caught up Lucy's garden cloak and hat, and the exercise had brought a rich bloom to her face.

"Gwendaline," he said, bewildered-like, "is that you?"

"Yes, dearest William," she replied, "I am here; don't be vexed; it is the anniversary of our wedding day, and I could not bear to sit without you after they were all gone to bed.

"Do you remember the old days, William, when you used to come many a long mile to see me in the summer evenings, and ride back again near midnight, though I wanted to drive you away sooner, because it was so far?"

"Ah, we were courting then, Gwendaline," said Sir William. "Poor wife! It would have been better for you if we had never met."

"No, no, no!" she said, with the fervor of years long gone by. "Were it to come over again, William, you are the only one I would have chosen from all the world, my dear, unhappy husband!"

Under the influence of that gentle, loving woman, Sir William's heart grew warm and buoyant from its paralyzing weight of misery and isolation.

"Gwendaline," he said, "let us go home. You are an angel; but I cannot talk here; let us go."

He put his arm around her still slight form, and they walked slowly toward their home.

The hearts of both were full of a strange, disquieting fear, but yet the love that each felt and saw in the other's look and tone greatly lightened the sorrow that oppressed them.

Yes, even the twenty-sixth anniversary of their wedding-day taught them that love had not lost its power to soothe and sweeten life's heaviest woes.

"Gwendaline!" said Sir William, suddenly.

"Well, my dear?"

"Did you meet any one?"

"Yes, Evan," she replied; "he was riding fast, and did not see me."

"Evan, our son?" he repeated.

"Yes, William, our firstborn," she said, tenderly.

"How very proud we were of him—how dearly we loved him," said the baronet, dreamily.

"Rather, how proud and loving we are still, my husband," she said, in gentle reproach.

"You are wrapt up in him, Gwendaline," said her husband.

"Yes, William; in you and our children," she replied.

Again there was a pause.

After a while the baronet spoke calmly and fondly.

"Gwendaline," said he, "you can forgive what few women could; you refrain from reproach, and you only govern by gentle love and sweet patience. But, tell me, my wife, could you bear it—could you forgive in me, for instance, or in Evan?"

She stopped for a moment, and looked up in his face.

"'Forgive even as ye would be forgiven, even to seventy times seven,'" she said, in low, sweet tones.

"But a great crime, Gwendaline," said the baronet, "such as—well, we will say murder? That is the very greatest, you know."

She drew a long, deep breath ere she replied:

"I would forgive even that, William, and—and—and—"

"And what, Gwendaline?" said the baronet.

"And die," she whispered.

Sir William sighed.

He must not unburthen his heart to her; no, she must not die.

They quickened their footsteps, and soon reached the Grange.

The table in the library was covered with some simple but cheerful preparations for supper, and the coffee-pot was all ready for a refreshing cup.

Lady Lloyd threw off her hat and cloak, and busied herself in preparing a tempting cup of coffee, and placing some dainty morsels of cold game and rolls on her husband's plate.

Sir William ate at first merely to please his wife, but by degrees the strong aromatic beverage and the food, which gradually stayed the gnawings of the empty, craving system, revived him, and his very consciousness of a manly struggle—an honest and fruitful repentance—gave dignity and energy to his mien that had long been absent from it.

He was his old self again, though shattered and wounded by the terrible ordeal he had passed through.

"Gwendaline," he said turning to her, "listen to me."

She was all attention, as she looked at the baronet, strangely.

"You have borne with me like an angel, even though you knew not all the causes—I will not say the excuses—for my degradation and sinful indulgence.

"But it is past. You have just reminded me that it is the anniversary of our wedding-day. I renew, not only the vows made six-and-twenty years ago, my wife, but I add to it the solemn promise never again to offend God or grieve you by the excess which has disgraced the last years of our lives.

"And, if God gives me strength and life, it is my purpose to do all that in me lies to clear my conscience from the burden that has driven me to sin, and offer some atonement for—"

He stopped.

He dared not utter the words that were on his lips.

The mild, questioning eye of his wife, now full of happy tears, were fixed upon him.

"No, dear wife," he said, "not even to you can I tell all; you will trust me, I know, and help me in doing right, as you have born with me in sin and sorrow."

"My dear, I will," replied Lady Lloyd, her eyes uplifted, and her hands clasping his.

It was a solemn, but a happy, hour for that loving, long-suffering wife—such happiness as might be well supposed to possess an angel's mind on the repentance of a sinner, could a sinner be as dear to an angel's heart as the erring Sir William Lloyd was to her who had, indeed, well fulfilled her marriage vow, in sorrow and in sickness, and even in shame.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE post-bag never arrived at the Grange before noon, a delay that would appear intolerable to a native of the civilised regions of a large city.

Indeed, it did sometimes interfere with the arrangements for the day at the Grange, when any especial letter was expected, as no one liked to risk a further delay of some hours by starting on any expedition till the great event of the day was over.

But this rarely happened in the usual routine of their quiet lives, from the few ties retained by the Grange family with the outward world.

A letter from Evan when absent, a casual epistle from some old friend of William's, or schoolmate of Lucy's, and an occasional newspaper, were usually the most exciting contents of that bag of fate—the post-bag.

On the morning after the events narrated in the previous chapter, the little leather wallet, which was usually full, was delivered to the good baronet, with the same care and precision by the old butler as in times gone by, when he was the bearer of letters that carried interest and importance in their very aspect: and Sir William, who was present at the early luncheon which had taken the place of dinner since the arrival of the guests, unlocked and drew out the various letters, with evident surprise at the number and appearance of the contents he distributed.

"Two for you, De St. Hilaire," said he; "one for Evan; one for Laura, and two for me. You and Lucy are very ill-used, my dear Gwendaline."

"Not if we share the wondrful news that must be contained in all those ponderous missives, papa," said Lucy, gaily, glancing at the thick letters delivered to the count and her brother.

A slight pause ensued.

The fortunate recipients opened their letters, and hastily perused them, with now and then a slight exclamation, as they went on.

Lady Lloyd anxiously watched the faces of her husband and son as they read, and Lucy could not help a hasty glance at Paul's less readable face during the same operation.

"My news is chequered," said the count, who was the first to speak. "I am happy to have at last succeeded in my efforts for my friend Evan, which I imagine his own correspondence will verify; but I regret to say"—and a glance at Lucy spoke louder than the words—"Laura and myself must take leave of our kind friends almost immediately."

"What is it, Paul?" asked Laura, eagerly. "Do not speak riddles, there's a dear brother."

"Simply this, true daughter of Eve," was the reply, "Evan has at last obtained an appointment abroad, which one of my letters, and I imagine, one of his, proves: and I have a letter from my notary, that requires our instant presence at St. Hilaire. We must start from here within a day or two at the latest."

"Evan obtained an appointment!" exclaimed Sir William, in amazement; "I had no idea that such a thing was in contemplation."

"I thought it better not to torment you with all the hopes, and fears, and suspense," said Paul, smiling; "but it is so good an appointment that I hope you will not object to it, now it is settled.

"It was Evan's wish, or I should not, of course, have moved in it; and luckily my father had one or two good solid English friends besides yourself, Sir William, and our own Ambassador not in a good world, also."

"We owe you a deep debt of gratitude, Paul, said Sir William, who had now recovered from his surprise. "It was like your father's son, and I can never repay so great a service."

"You can; and I would trust you will, sir," was the low reply, while the others were crowding round Evan, with half tearful, half-joyful congratulations.

It was a good and memorable post he had obtained; but, alas! it took the son and brother from their home, their country, and it would, in all probability, be a long, if not a final, separation.

And Evan himself—there was pride and exultation in his look, and yet a troubled air, which did not escape the quick eye of Laura.

"And when must you enter on your duties?" asked the baronet.

"I do not know. I must, of course, go up to town at once, and then I shall hear all particulars," he replied, absently, his eyes fixed on the second, and still unopened letter.

"Better get with us, then," observed Paul.

Evan started. "We leave here the day after to-morrow, and you couldn't well go before that time. As to [illegible]

A little more discussion as to the startling news ensued, and the baronet said, glancing at his own letter:

"It is somewhat strange, Evan, that just as you are going from your own country, your friends will return.

"I have a letter here from Colonel Biddulph, informing me that his youngest son's health will not bear the climate any longer, and he is going to send both the boys home, under their tutor's care.

"And, by the way, this is a very great compliment to the young man himself. I am glad he has done justice to the recommendation."

Evan changed color.

He muttered some not very intelligible words, and, pleading an engagement, of which no one had before heard, he left the room.

But no sooner was he ensconced in his own room, with the door locked against intruders, than he threw himself on a chair, and, opening the shabby-looking epistle in his hand, hastily read the few words it contained.

"Retribution is slow, but sure. Justice sleeps sometimes, but never dies. Atonement for the past may be made by just dealing for the future; but broken faith and treachery will inevitably bring a tremendous punishment for a long accumulation of crime.

"Repent, and do justice by the weak and innocent; for a strong hand and an iron will are ready to protect and avenge.

NEMESIS."

Evan read these lines, written in a hand that was unknown to him, though he fancied that it was somewhat feigned; and that some characters were not so utterly unfamiliar as they appeared at first sight.

He read and re-read, and the color left his cheek and lips, and then returned in a flush of angry blood that suffused his whole face.

"Fool!" he exclaimed, "she shall pay for this. There must have been treachery on her part. It is evidently an artful trick to secure me; but she is terribly mistaken, as she will find to her cost."

But even as the words passed his lips, the image of that pure, innocent, lovely girl, and the memory of her steadfast truth and constancy amidst the most trying suffering, rebuked the slander.

His own heart told him that Winifred was incapable of treachery or intrigue, and yet more so, of plotting against himself.

But with this conviction came more alarming reflections.

Could that letter be associated with the announcement made by his father of the return to Colonel Biddulph's sons with their tutor to England?

Their tutor who was he? what was he? Evan Lloyd would have given much to answer the question as he wished; would have given more could he have been sure that the ship in which those innocent boys and the "Alinutt," spoken of by the colonel, would never reach he British shores. All, however, tended to urge on the course of events, and to some extent his good star favored him.

The sudden success of Paul de St. Hilaire's application, their equally unlooked-for departure, and the necessity of his own journey, were all as favorable for his present plans as if he had himself arranged them for their accomplishment, and he began once more to feel a fatalist confidence in his good fortune that so often accompanies such characteristics as his.

"Courage," he thought, tearing the letter he had received into infinitesimal pieces, "your good luck will not desert you, Evan Lloyd. Only be true to yourself, old fellow, and Fortune won't dare to play you false, capricious jade though she be."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

LOVER AND LORD.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "AN ANGEL UNAWARES"

"A SHOCKING SCANDAL," "SOWING AND REAPING," "PEGGY."

ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XVII.—[CONTINUED.]

OH, I cannot!" said Nora, "Vance, dear Vance, you have been so good, so kind a brother, and more than a brother to me, have pity on me now, and tell me all!"

Still Vance sat stupidly mute beside her, resisting her prayer no longer, but praying in his turn that the right words in which to answer it would come; at present he could find none.

She misinterpreted his silence, and slipped suddenly on her knees.

"Vance, you do not know, you cannot know, what it is to lie sleepless through the hours of the night, groping and groping in a worse darkness than that which lies around you for a lost part of your life—to feel that there is something full of pain and horror, something that makes you different from all other people, that has whitened your hair while you are pitifully young, and made your friends, the best and kindest of them, shrink from you, even while they are most kind. Yes"—as the man would have broken in with a forced disclaimer of what he knew to be the truth—"even you at times—I have seen you look at me with such pity and such horror!" She paused, clasping both hands before her eyes, as though to shut some painful object from her sight, then added in an earnest whisper, "Vance, if you only knew the torture of suspense, you would have pity upon me and tell me all!"

Vance Singleton could resist no longer. Even the worst he had to tell could hardly exceed the torture of which he had caught a brief and passing glimpse.

"I will tell you all, Nora; but you must be very strong and brave," he said eyeing the white face anxiously, wishing with all his heart that Nettie would come in, that the task had fallen to her.

"I will," Nora said simply; and, though her lips trembled, there was a resolute gleam in the clear gray eyes which comforted and helped the young man.

As briefly and gently as might be, he told her the whole story of the last few months—how Nettie had rescued her from suicide, how they had brought her with them, and how Providence had aided her escape—how the finding of the poor sea-waif who had been buried as Lady de Gretton had silenced all suspicion and stayed all pursuit.

She listened in the absolute silence she had promised, her face becoming rigidly, terribly calm.

Only the great changeful eyes, now dark as night, now brightening to a clear luminous gray, in any way interpreted the feelings that warred within her.

"Thank you," she said, when at last he brought the halting incoherent story to a close. "You and Nettie have been more than mortal in your goodness to me. Knowing what you know, thinking what you thought, your lives have both been sacrificed to me—a murderess?"

She grew so white as she spoke the terrible word that Vance cried hastily—

"No, Nora—a maddened, miserable girl."

"But none the less a murderess, if even in delirious frenzy I shed a fellow-creature's blood. Oh, Vance!" The voice that had hitherto been low and calm by strong constraint now rose to a shrill anguished cry. "Oh, Heaven help me, this is worse than all! No wonder that the outer world condemned me, when you, even you believed me guilty of this sin!"

"And are you not?"

The words broke from the man's lips in a hoarse whisper; his heart beat with such wild fierce throbbings that he could hardly force himself to speak. A thousand frantic thoughts flashed through his brain, bewildering him with their rapid rush.

In all his agonised musings on the subject never once had he entertained the saving thought of Nora's innocence before.

"And are you not? Nora, I have neither judged nor condemned you—answer me now!"

She looked at him and the mute reproach, the touch of incredulous scorn in the great eyes, hurt him the more for the gratitude that struggled with and strove to conquer both.

Then suddenly she fell upon her knees and raised her clasped hands, calling upon Heaven to testify to the truth of her words.

"As Heaven is my witness, no!" she said, in clear thrilling tones that never broke nor faltered; and on the earnest upturned face there shone a sudden light and glory that was not all shed there by the setting sun.

"Until I knelt by Lord de Gretton's side that morning, I know of no danger that threatened, no harm that had befallen him."

"Thank Heaven! Oh, thank Heaven for that!"

It was not Vance who spoke but Nettie who ran to Nora's side, and flinging both arms around her neck, clung to her with vehement unreserved affection, and sobbed and laughed aloud in a tempest of gratitude and joy.

It was Nettie, quick, loving impulsive Nettie, who did all these things, and, still holding Nora fast, turned round an April face to see how far Vance shared her wild unmeasured joy.

Standing within the doorway, she had heard those wild impassioned words, that sad appeal to Heaven's justice from the cruel judgment of man; and, with a tender woman's instinct, she never doubted its perfect truth.

Vance might pause and doubt, and long-ing to believe still, struggle with a lingering incredulity.

She knew no such middle course.

The dread shadow that had darkened her path so long vanished in a great glad burst of sunshine.

Should she of her own free will dwell in the darkness?

Nettie laughed, a little hysterically perhaps—for she was still thrilling from head to foot with intense excitement and immeasurable relief—but still laughed in honest scorn of the idea.

"You poor wronged darling!" she cried, hugging Nora again and meeting her calm sad glance with loving brimming eyes. "Can you ever forgive our cruel thoughts?"

"Can I ever thank you, rather?" Nora said gravely. "Thinking me that, how could you take me in?"

"Oh it was awful!" Nettie answered, with an honest little shudder that told plainly as any words how completely with her suspicion had become a thing of the past. "To love you with one half my heart and be downright afraid of you with the other, to see you so gentle and sweet and patient, and think those dear little white hands of yours were ever—that even in madness you——— Oh"—she broke off impatiently—"it is we who were mad ever to doubt you!"

Inexpressively grateful to be harassed and tortured girl were those honest incoherent utterances, worth all the eloquence of all the world's orators was that simple, illogical, ill-expressed trust.

Until now, through all her pain, Nora had not wept; now the tears gathered slowly in the great eyes and fell one by one down the pale face, as she bent it over Nettie's head.

For two or three minutes the women cried together, comforting, saving tears that did them both good.

"And Vance—what do you say to Vance?" Nettie cried, raising her head briskly.

Emotion soon exhausted itself in the young actress's sensible practical nature and all her instincts urged her on to action.

Her cry had done her a world of good, and cleared all the cobwebs from her brain; but there was no sort of sense in crying when speech would so much better serve her turn.

"What does Vance say to me, rather?" Nora answered, with a sort of grave and dignified pathos.

With Nettie she was in sympathy at once; the girl's impulsive outburst had broken down all barriers between them.

With the slower, sterner judge her innocence was still on trial.

A moment before Vance must still have blundered and stumbled over his answer; now—he hardly knew why—perhaps his faith caught fire from Nettie's fervent flame perhaps those eyes so clear and pure and proud rebuked and shamed his lingering doubt—he spoke on an inner impulse, and with perfect honesty, as he kissed the beautiful upraised face.

"I think, as Nettie thinks, that we were mad to doubt you. Forgive us, Nora, if you can."

Something like the ghost of the old Nora peeped for a moment from the troubled eyes and made the worn young face innocently fair and bright.

It vanished almost instantly; still it was something to have brought it there.

Vance Singleton's heart glowed with thankfulness as he saw it come and go.

They discussed the matter no more that day, as Nettie interposed with a peremptory nurse's veto, fearing the effect of further agitation in her patient's weakened state; but by-and-by Nora reverted to it, with a volunteered promise that it should be for the last time.

"I am dead, you know," she said with the sad far-away smile that gave her beautiful face a sweetly *spiritual* look.

"Nora Vansittart has her life before her—we must arrange that afterwards—but Nora Bruce is buried in Stoke Vernon after to-day. We will not disturb her grave."

"But, Nora," Nettie interrupted, in quick dismay, "you speak as though this state of things were final. That must not and shall not be—mind it, Vance? some day her innocence will be proved."

"I think not dear," Nora interrupted, touching with soft caressing fingers the shining rings upon the low white brow. "I think that those who found me guilty then would hardly reverse their verdict now."

Nettie looked thoughtful, and knew instinctively what doubt was troubling her mind.

Had they done harm, and not good by their precipitate step?

Had they condemned Nora to a living death, when her innocence might possibly be proved.

"No," she said, as though interpreting the thoughts of the young pair.

"You did the very best that could have been done in every way. My life really ended before—that dreadful day."

She was long before she recovered from the shock of that awaking—before she roused herself to anything like interest in her life; but it was as impossible for gloom to abide in Nettie's bright presence as for darkness to resist the influence of the sun.

By every loving wile and tender womanly device she drew the girl from the memory-haunted solitude of her own thoughts and more and more within the circle of her own vivid interests.

Now it was word with which Nora must help her, now advice that Nora's keen artistic taste must give, and now—this with a shy and deprecating glance at her husband—little hints that the better-educated and more highly-bred Nora might bestow upon the clever little representative of modern-comedy ladies.

So, little by little, half unconsciously, and half, as it were, against her will, Nora passed from her dreary dreamland back to the waking world.

People who knew Vance and Nettie, their fellow-workers at the theatre, and those few literary and artistic friends whom they had permitted themselves to make grew quite accustomed to see Mrs. Sidney Vansittart accompanied by the beautiful white-haired girl whose face was like a tragic poem, as one of her numerous admirers, said, and whose voice in her lightest moments, had a strangely sorrowful ring.

That voice so impressed their manager that he made strenuous exertions to persuade her that her true vocation lay within the walls of a theatre, and her wild terror of the bare idea amused as much as it surprised him.

"She has queer ideas, that sister of yours, Van," he said to Vance, with the free-and-easy manner of his class, "and a deuced high look, and all that sort of thing. Somehow if I did not know how it was, I should have taken her for a downright swell!"

Vance laughed, less because the polite implication amused him that to cover the uneasiness the careless words caused.

"Oh, I don't mean anything impolite, I assure you!

"You are a first-rate fellow in your way, high-toned manners, and all that sort of thing; but Miss Vansittart is—is—hang it, I don't quite know what she is," he finished, with a puzzled little laugh, "but something quite out of the way and extraordinary? She might make a fortune on the stage, if she has only half the passion and go her face promises.

"I wonder you have never thought of running her in a tragic line, Van? And yet I do not know.

"Somehow she seems a cut above the theatre, though she does not mind being drawn to Mrs. V."

Vance felt a cold thrill as he listened, and assumed his loftiest manner for the repression of the man, who was quite unconscious that his speculations could give offence.

"My sister is quite capable of managing her own affairs, I assure you," he said coldly; whereupon Mr. Valance laughed, shrugged his shoulders, and, with an amused and careless "Quite so, dear boy!" let the matter drop to the young actor's infinite relief.

And meantime the original engagement made by Vance and Nettie had expired.

Mr. Valance was willing enough to renew it; and, though Vance knew his young wife's eyes and thoughts turned, with an ever-growing longing, back across the wide waste of water that rolled and tossed between her and her mother and Jenny, and that little home of which she had been the bread-winner and the head, he knew also that he should hear no murmur from the sweet red lips if he deemed longer exile wisest and best.

But, while he still doubted, for Nora's sake, whether or not to sign, while the manager pressed him urgently, Nora herself interposed in a calm resolute fashion that lifted the burden of responsibility from Vance Singleton's mind.

"You must not keep Nettie from her mother any longer, Vance. It is her turn to be considered now.

"She is too unselfish to put her wish into words, but it is always in her thoughts and in her eyes, dear. You must take her home."

"And you?" the young man asked eagerly.

Perhaps she was right.

Cristine and his mother were in Germany still.

Who else would be likely to recognise in the sorrowful white-haired Miss Vansittart the beautiful Lady de Gretton of a day?

"I shall come too.

"Yes, it will be quite safe, Vance," the girl added, with her brave pathetic smile, "for you know that I am dead."

So Mr. Valance angrily tore up his agreement; and the next "White Star" steamer bore the party home.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE last sunset brightness of a fine September afternoon streamed into the rather dingy room in which two women sat at work, touching two bent heads with a glory that discovered all the silver threads in the darkness of the one, all the golden tints among the pale yellow tresses of the other.

The year that had brought them little in the way of solid good fortune and left them less in the shape of pleasant memories had in no way altered the outward aspect of Cristine Singleton or Mrs. Bruce.

The young woman might look a trifle more haggard and pinched, a little more restlessly discontented with herself and a world of which she had asked much and obtained little—the elder, in the somewhat shabby weeds of her widowhood, a less important personage than the beamingly complacent lady who was Lord de Gretton's mother-in-law-elect; but in all substantial things these two were altogether unchanged.

From boarding-house to boarding-house from Continental town to Continental town, they had wandered in obedience to Cristine's imperious will and restless craving for excitement.

Vainly had Mrs. Bruce protested that the strain upon the slender income left them by her late husband, and upon the remittances sent from time to time by the perpetually absent Vance, was greater than they could bear; the slightest protest was invariably followed by a furiously recriminatory scene, from which the weakened nervous system of the elder woman instinctively shrank.

"My face is my fortune," Cristine would say with concentrated bitterness, "and a fortune that fails off every day.

"If you would not be burdened for life with a penniless old-maid daughter, you must let me make my last promise now.

"If I am unsuccessful at the end of a couple of years, I promise you there is no hole of a country town so out of the way and obscure that I will not creep into it and hide my diminished head with pleasure."

Whereupon Mrs. Bruce remonstrating no more, but sighing very dolefully would say—

"Very well, my dear, it shall be as you wish; but money is getting very low, and at the last place——"

"I wanted three new dresses and a long flirtation, I know."

Not all her self-control could keep the angry mortified flush from Cristine's pale smooth skin.

"You will not make matters easier, mother by flinging my failures in my face. Nothing venture, nothing win, you know; and I will fling my last stake before I con-

sent to our mouldering away together at little Pedlington-by-the-Sea."

So the last stake was played, and, with it, contrary to all her expectations, Cristine won her prize.

Fate placed her at a *table-d' hote* next to a tall, stout, olive-complexioned, black-eyed, black-bearded man, upon whom the waiters attended with distinguished respect, and whom his fellow-guests regarded with amused and yet deferential attention.

"A Jew!" was Cristine's first mental comment, as her keen sidelong glance surveyed the bold aquiline sweep of feature, the full sensual lips, the dark eyes, heavy-lidded and slowly moving, yet amazing shrewd and bright.

"And a rich Jew too!"—as she noted the glitter of the priceless diamonds on the big white hands and in the wide expanse of shirt-front.

In both conjectures she was right.

Mr. Israel Benjuda, or the Baron Benjuda, as he preferred and had some shadowy claim to be called, was rich, in the estimation of people with less limited notions than Cristine.

He was also rather a famous person in his way.

Every one who was any one knew him in one of his multifarious characters at home or abroad.

Benjuda the financier was great upon 'Change, Benjuda the money-lender was hand-in-glove with half the aristocracy and more than one impecunious foreign sovereign.

Benjuda the connoisseur was known and respected in art-circles.

Benjuda, himself a more than respectable musician, was the proprietor of a foreign concert-hall and opera-house, and was more than suspected of an interest in two or three influential papers.

In fact, Benjuda was Protean, and in one shape or other pervaded society to such an extent there was something remarkable in the fact that even Cristine had never encountered him before.

She had not.

His name was sufficiently well known to make her heart flutter with a wild ambition when she recalled the too-candid admiration with which the big heavy-lidded eyes had rested on the lily-like fairness of her face.

Hers was, she thought, just the style of beauty to please this swarthy Eastern-looking man.

Why should she not wear those jewels, the lustre of which seemed to dazzle and impose a certain deference on all who approached them?

Why should not she, who, as Cristine Singleton, had made so dismal a failure of her life, shine forth with sudden splendor as the Baroness Benjuda?

True, the man himself must be taken into account.

A keen-witted man of the world, rich beyond counting, and by no means unpresentable, a little barbaric magnificence being allowed for, he must have escaped many and many a subtly-laid feminine snare to remain a bachelor at forty-five.

Such a man would be fastidious in his tastes and exacting in his requirements, a most unlikely person to take an hotel-made acquaintance for a wife, unless the attractions offered were overpoweringly strong.

But Cristine's estimate of her own charms was not a low one, and events certainly justified her faith in the present instance.

From the moment in which the bold dark eyes rested on her Israel Benjuda was half-unconsciously conscious that he was more interested in his quiet neighbor than he had ever been in any woman before.

Handsome girls by the dozen, girls with a youthful freshness and downright flesh-and-blood beauty that this one lacked, had made themselves charming for his benefit, and won but coldly critical admiration in return.

Cristine—somehow she possessed a unique charm for him.

He was never tired of watching the "finely regular line" of the straight Greek features, the satin smoothness of the small blond head, the cold clear fire of the large blue eyes, the slender curves of the long throat and tall figure—above all, the enchanting whiteness of a lily-like skin which was rarely flushed by the faintest reflection of the rose.

She was always wore white at these times.

It jarred less with the mourning which, much to her vexation, her mother still persistently wore than any color would have done, and added to the spiritual look that she had tact enough to see was her chief charm in Baron Benjuda's eyes.

And her hopes would have taken a higher flight than they had yet done could she have guessed the painful persistency with which the slender white-robed figure haunted the Baron's thoughts, and how, in the midst of abstruse calculations and delicately diplomatic arrangements, he found himself idly wondering how his "ice-maiden," as he had learned to call her, would look in more decided tints.

"Say black velvet and diamonds," he mused, leaning his sleek bullet-head back against the velvet rest of the chair, letting the cigarette-smoke curl up to the gilded ceiling and carry his floating fancies with it in a luxurious day-dream—"or blue, ethereal blue, faint as the changeless azure of her eyes, and pearls, or pale tea-rose—or—or——

"Gad, I shall have to marry her, just to try the effect of giving her perfect whiteness a colored setting!"

He laughed lastly, enjoying the idea, and yet conscious that it was by no means altogether a joke.

"The charm that held him was as strong as it was subtle, and he knew in his heart that it was more likely to strengthen than to break.

Everything about Cristine but the poverty he shrewdly guessed at and the friendlessness that was so very apparent pleased him as well as her face.

He liked the tranquil grace of her movements and the slow clear tones of her voice.

The cynicism that she could not wholly repress or banish from her most elaborately pleasant talk, the gently-hinted disbelief in human unselfishness which had shocked and frightened Miss Singleton's admirers more than once, had a very curious charm for him.

"She is unique, as my wife should be—as I am," he would say to himself and his cigarette, with his little silly laugh.

"I did not think that fate would overtake me in this fashion; but we shall see."

But, though he had thoroughly accustomed himself think of Cristine as his wife the words that would make her his were still unspoken when Mrs. Bruce, in obedience to her daughter, announced that they must return to England.

The poor woman watched the dark face anxiously to see the effect of her words, and was at first rather disappointed that the Baron merely stroked his heavy black moustache complacently.

"That is too charming," he said, with a smile that showed the big white glittering teeth to full advantage, "because I can then offer you and Miss Singleton my escort. I too return to England next week."

Cristine was indeed delighted with the news her mother brought, and with her travelling companion.

Never had she been more full of charm and grace than during that homeward journey.

Hope lighted the blue eyes with a strange new fire, and even faintly tinged the perfectly-curved cheek.

At last all things were to be well with her, she thought.

She was to be lifted from the dire poverty she loathed into the luxurious regions of abundant wealth.

They had been but two days in London, and were busily occupied with preparations for what Cristine firmly believed would be the last act in the drama of her wooing.

But both Mrs. Bruce and her daughter counted every second of this waiting-time as a long and weary hour in the calendar of hope deferred.

The elder woman indeed felt that things were growing desperate with them, that unless "something happened" soon she must, for pecuniary, make a stand against her determined daughter.

The lodgings they had taken were, in deference to the grandeur of their escort, far beyond their modest means.

Poor Mrs. Bruce rarely closed her eyes without dreaming of the poorhouse, and seeing herself arrayed in the quaintly unbecoming costume of an elderly female pauper out for the day.

The light grew fainter in the dingy expensive room, and Cristine looked up impatiently from her task of embroidering white beads upon a white silk bodice, to be worn that night.

"Pray light the lamp, mother, or I shall never finish this."

Mrs. Bruce rose with a sigh, and the mournful reflection that oil was so much a pint, and there was still a clear hour of daylight, if only Cristine would move a little nearer the window.

"Why, how you sigh, mother! One would think I had set you some Herculean task."

"Oh, it is not the task! I was thinking of money."

"Do you ever think of anything else?" Cristine asked, turning round the glittering garment that flashed back a thousand reflections of the rosy lamplight and examining it with keenly critical eyes.

"What can I think of but that which is all-important? Cristine, do you know how low our funds really are? If Vance does not write or come——"

"Heaven forbid that he should come just now!" Cristine said fervently.

"Why?"—Mrs. Bruce's tone was very indignant.

"You are not ashamed of your brother, I hope?"

Cristine shrugged her shoulders.

"He is good-looking enough, and his manners are, or were, decent; but I do not think I should care to present him to the Baron."

This was touching Mrs. Bruce upon her tenderest point.

Her dark face flushed angrily.

"That fat old Jew!" she cried, with impulsive scorn.

"You cannot name him and my handsome Vance together!"

"Certainly not," Cristine said coolly, in no wise offended by the disparaging allusion to her suitor.

"Naturally I accord them very different places in my esteem. 'The fat Jew,' as you politely call him, is a man of excellent taste who admires and intends to marry me. Nance an unnatural brother who virtually casts me off—the Baron a millionaire, Vance a professionless—what shall I say?—loafer."

"At least, we know that he is not only earning an honest living, but helps to provide for us!" Mrs. Bruce cried severely.

"He is earning a living—whether honest or not he best knows himself," said the affectionate sister, with a sceptical laugh.

"Vance was not over-well provided for the battle of life, and I would rather not ask how he has fought it until the Baron and I are safely one.

"And now, mother, we really must not waste any more time in discussion, or the Baron will be here before we are ready."

Cristine spoke in her most imperative tones.

And, indignant as she was, Mrs. Bruce felt that she must needs submit.

Baron Benjuda was to escort them that night to the smallest and most fashionable of modern theatres, at which he had secured a box for the first performance of a new play.

Something in his manner had told Cristine that the well-cushioned dimly-lighted loge was to be the scene of another and more personally interesting drama than that played out upon the stage, and her heart thrilled with anticipative triumph as she dressed for her part.

Her toilette suited her fair pale beauty to perfection—the long glittering jacket-bodice the classically straight lines of the long white skirt, the white flowers and dark green leaves wreathing the small golden head.

She looked as the Baron best liked to see her, like a pale winter lily, a thing all chill whiteness and purity.

"My snow-queen," he cried, with whispered admiration, as she threw back the fleecy whiteness of her furry wrap and took her place in the front of the box, "you are perfect to-night!"

The frosty blue eyes smiled up into the ardent blackness of those bent upon her, and Cristine knew that the struggle was over and the battle won.

Whatever resistant force in the man's nature had arrayed itself against her was vanquished now.

He would speak to-night.

She listened no more to the soft and dreamy melodies that ushered in the new piece—her mother, whose seat fronted and whose lorgnette swept the stage, might concentrate her whole attention there: she had other and more important cares on hand.

She did not even turn when the curtain rose and the echo of well-bred softly-tuned voices floated into the box, for mingling with them was the Baron's deeper tone, and it said—

"Cristine, you and I have tastes in common.

"You are the prettiest woman I have ever seen!

"You are my idea of a companion in every way. I am older than you, but I am rich, and—and—— What the deuce is it?"

He turned round angrily, for Mrs. Bruce, with a face from which all the florid hues had suddenly vanished, had risen to her feet, and, with eyes that seemed half starting from her head with wonder, were excitedly calling to Cristine to "Look, look!"

Naturally the Baron "looked" himself in the direction of the stage to which she pointed, and, seeing there nothing more remarkable than the common stage-picture of a handsome young man leaning against a piano and making dreamy and poetic love to a slim girl, who played, or feigned to play, thereon, he felt himself decidedly aggrieved in that his own more practical wooing had been interrupted to such small purpose.

"What an excitable old idiot she must be to take her amusements in this fashion!" he thought crossly.

"I do not know that I quite care for a mad mother-in-law, even as an accompaniment to my incomparable Cristine."

But, as his gaze rested on the excited woman, he doubted her sanity no longer, though she was certainly making his box unpleasantly conspicuous still.

Her hand clasped Cristine's wrist, and, as she forced the reluctant girl to bend forward, and the fuller light fell across the pale perfect face, he read in the clear cold eyes quick recognition, anger, and disgust.

"It is Vance!" the woman cried eagerly. "Cristine, do you not know him? It is Vance!"

If a look could kill, Mrs. Bruce would have fallen dead at her daughter's feet.

Naturally the Baron "looked" himself in the direction of the stage to which she pointed, and, looking from under his heavy half-closed lids at the excited pair, asked, in his suavest tones—

"Pray do not shut me out from this small comedy of recognitions. Pray tell me who is 'Vance'?"

Mrs. Bruce's eyes were on the stage, Cristine's on the floor.

She raised them suddenly, and said, with her little frosty laugh—

"Truth is best, I suppose, even when one is not proud of it, as now.

"'Vance,' or 'Mr. Sidney Vansittart,' as I see he chooses to be called here"—touching contemptuously the perfumed programme on her lap—"is a relative of ours."

"For shame, Cristine!" Mrs. Bruce turned round quickly, forgetting all the interests she imperilled by her impulsive indignation.

"Why do not you say at once, and honestly, that Vance is your own brother?"

Cristine's heart grew very cold within her.

So sharp and cruel was her disappointment there was hardly room for anger in her thoughts.

By-and-by she would remember that her mother had made shipwreck of her hopes in the very hour of their fulfilment, and take vengeance for her wrongs.

But now she could only feel that the battle she had all but won was lost indeed.

She sat, with down-bent head, idly gazing at the costly exotics—the Baron's gift—that were clasped with an unconscious force in her slender fingers.

They were all against her, she thought, mother and brother now, as Nora and her step-father had been in the old days.

True she had always fought for her own hand, and never heeded them; but that made her none the less sensitive to their cruelty.

Israel Benjuda watched the fair flower-wreathed head for a few moments, with keen comprehension of the girl's feelings, and an intense satisfaction in the fact that she did feel.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Scientific and Useful.

ELECTRIC BALLOON.—An electric screw balloon recently made a trial trip at Paris. The experiment is stated to have been partially successful, although the apparatus was powerless to prevent the spinning motion of the balloon when heading against the wind. Certain improvements are to be made in the electromotor of the balloon, when another trip will be made.

A SPRING ROAD LOCOMOTIVE.—A new agricultural road locomotive of 6 horse-power has been devised the novel feature being the introduction of springs to lessen the jar and shock of travel over country roads. The springs are spiral and carried in boxes with a piston arrangement connected with the axle boxes. The use of springs is found to conduce greatly to the durability of the engine.

MUSIC-TURNER.—A simple little contrivance for turning over the pages of music has been invented by an Armenian mechanic named Erghanian, and patented in several European countries. This small apparatus is worked silently by a treadle, and gently picks up the page which it lays smoothly on the opposite one. It can be applied to any ordinary music-stand, avoiding by its use the pause and flapping of leaves when the violin players have to wait and turn over the pages of their music.

LIQUID BRONZE.—Attempts have been hitherto made to produce bronze colors on non-metallic objects, but these have hitherto required a prior preparation of the surface, and the paint is, moreover, expensive. A cheap and effective bronze or metallustred paint has, however, been discovered. The new paint has twelve distinct colors from red to blue, with any number of combined tints. Its metallic lustre is very striking, and it can be applied to porous, soft or hard surfaces with equal facility.

A VELOCIPEDE SLEIGH.—A unicycle sleigh has been introduced, and promises to become serviceable where long-continued frosts are the rule during the long winter months. It consists of a bicycle frame with saddle, supported by four sleigh runners, and a central wheel cycle, studded round its rim with spikes which bite the ice. This is the driving wheel, and it is turned by treadles in the ordinary way. The two front skates, or runners, are made to slue round at the will of the driver in the act of steering.

Farm and Garden.

FRUIT TREES.—In making selections of fruit trees be careful to choose those with smooth, healthy-looking bark, and which have entirely shed their leaves and possess plenty of small fibrous roots.

TURNIPS FOR VINE.—A traveler in the Low Counties, Holland, says while making a tour through the agricultural districts recently, he was surprised at the immense turnip tracts that greeted the eye on every hand. At first it seemed to him as though a turnip mania was about to succeed the tulip mania; but a little inquiry discovered the fact that the expressed juice of this vegetable was sent to France, there to be made into champagne.

IMPERVIOUS TO MOISTURE.—It is said that canvas may be made as impervious to moisture as leather, by steeping it in a decoction of one pound of oak bark with four teen pounds of boiling water. This quantity is sufficient for eight yards of stuff. The cloak has to soak twenty-four hours, when it is taken out, passed through running water and hung up to dry. The flax and hemp fibres, in absorbing the tannin, are at the same time better fitted to resist wear.

AIR AND SUNSHINE.—The flesh of fowls of any kind, so epicures profess to believe, which have always been allowed their liberty, and air and sunshine without stint, is much superior to that of those confined while fattening. Nevertheless, if fowls are kept in clean and comfortable coops, or pens are regularly watered and feed upon wholesome food and plenty of it, every one may be sure of having desirable dishes of poultry flesh on the table provided the cook understands and does her duty.

SPINAL DISEASE.—When pigs become unable to use their hind quarters, it is an indication of spinal disease, or more particularly of inflammation of the covering membrane of the spine. This affects the nerves of the loins and causes paralysis. The remedy is to apply hot fomentation of the back, wipe the skin dry, and immediately apply spirits of turpentine or mustard paste. The disease does not injure the pork in any way unless the kidneys are affected, in which case if the water does not appear right, give half a dram of salt-petre. If the kidneys are disordered the meat may taste strong.

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

SIXTY-THIRD YEAR.

SATURDAY EVENING, JAN. 5, 1884.

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THORNS AND BLOSSOMS.

In this issue of THE POST we begin a new serial, by the author of "A Black Veil," "From Gloom to Sunlight," etc. All of this great writer's works are of the deepest interest, but we think our readers will say, after perusing "Thorns and Blossoms," that nothing of equal merit has ever issued from her prolific and powerful pen.

THE NEW YEAR.

It is not strange, perhaps, all things considered, that even the most thoughtless at ordinary times, are made thoughtful, at least for a while, by the recurrence of New Year's Day. As time goes on our lives become full of anniversaries; and, whether we take note of them or not outwardly, we are conscious of their presence. So it is that the unfailing regularity with which this season makes its appearance, is big with portent unto all. Happy is it for us if these anniversaries mark on the whole the occurrence of pleasant events, or the memories of good thoughts and deeds.

But above all other times, perhaps, is New Year's valuable in that it is of use to suggest the beginning of a new course—that fresh start which is to make our race in life a success, not a failure—that "turning over of a new leaf" which is to help to bring about a fair writing on each new page. Birthdays are favorite times for such "fresh starts," and the beginning of a New Year is a sort of general birthday, when everyone has a marked time, the occurrence of which may well justify the beginning of something new—is a time when we give a thought to what we leave behind, and look forward to what is coming.

For ourselves, what has the past year done? This must be for each of us the most intimate and most profoundly interesting question of all. Has it given us health and prosperity? Has it brought "the friend and the true, true love?" Has it been full of incident, and bustle, and life, or has it brought days of pain and nights of weariness? Has its portion been poverty, or riches? Whatever may have been our lot, we cannot help but think of it as we sit waiting for the joy bells of the New Year to clash on the frosty air. Then we turn and look forward to ask: What is the New Year bringing? What will come to the nations—to our work—to our friends? All these thoughts float past. But supreme above all, and most pressing, comes the question: What does it hold for us? Is it life or death—is it success or failure—is it love or loneliness, that lies waiting for us behind the slowly-opening gates? Who can tell? We can but wait. In quietness and confidence is our strength. Such gifts of happiness as may be for us we shall receive with willing hands and glad hearts; such pain, and sorrow, and longing as may come, we shall strive meekly to bear. And as it can be no harm to wish it, we hope all who read these lines may have a Happy New Year, but should it not be so, that wisdom and faith will put it in their hearts to feel, since our way is not His way, that even in that case, all is for the best.

SANCTUM CHAT.

ADVERTISING has reached a fine art. It absorbs everything—from artistic paintings to the making and eating of pumpkin pies in public. At Rochester lately two young people hired themselves out to a clothing house firm for the purpose of being married in the show-window in the evening, in full view of the crowd.

—

THE example of the sort of practices which charity organization societies hope to abolish, was reported at the annual meeting of the Baltimore society, lately. This was the case of a woman who belonged to six churches of different denominations, solely for the advantage she derived thereby when alms are distributed.

—

THE vaccination of animals, according to the plan suggested by the eminent French savant, M. Pasteur, in order to protect them against rinderpest and other diseases, has been tried in British Burmah with great success. Some calves, elephants, sheep, and a pig, were inoculated with M. Pasteur's lymph, and, though they suffered in no way from the experiment, the calves in particular seemed to have been so far proof from further infection that they escaped scot-free when placed several times among herds severely affected with rinderpest.

—

WITHIN a comparatively brief period two residents of Louisville have died of strains suffered while acting as pall-bearers. It is believed that this fact moved Professor Smith, of that city, a well-known scientific man, to request in his will that none of his friends be asked to be bearers of his coffin, and to direct that six strong men be employed for that purpose.

—

A PROMINENT New York physician says that Italian opera is increasing the death rate, and many cases of pneumonia occur every day, brought on by the exposure of men in dress coats and women in low-necked dresses. Both go to the opera with about half the amount of clothing they usually wear, stand in the drafts of the doors, chatting, and oftentimes walk a square or so in the night air.

—

THE latest use to which electricity has been put is the launching of ships. The new British turret ship Colossus was released from her cradle at Plymouth, by the simple touching of a button, which caused an electric current to knock away the dog-shears, to break a bottle of wine over the ship's nose, and to start up a musical box. The vessel, which weighed 4,420 tons, and was the heaviest ever launched at the yard, took the water at once without accident.

—

AT a recent meeting of the Municipal Council of Brussels the Burgomaster brought forward a proposition which is expected to lead to a novel regulation regarding the naming of streets after illustrious individuals. According to the Burgomaster, it is not enough that a street should bear the name of an eminent citizen; the name should be followed by an inscription setting forth briefly his claims to the respect of the country. To this it was also suggested that there should be added a medalion portrait or emblem.

—

A SPANISH paper, the Day, gives details respecting the excess of officers in the Spanish army. For every two and a half men who shoulder the musket, which general term includes corporals and sergeants, there is one man in the Spanish military service who does not. As regards officers alone, there is one Captain-General for every 11,003 soldiers, one Lieutenant-General for 1,013, one Major-General for 693, one Brigadier for 271, one Colonel for 195, one Lieutenant-Colonel for 99, one Major for 42, one Captain for 18, one Lieutenant for 15, and an Ensign for every 6.

—

A REMARKABLE illustration of what can be accomplished by energy and persistent application was afforded by John Trottel, who died recently in Geneva, Switzerland. Born with only short, pointed arms, he was sought eagerly by showmen, but his parents gave him a good education. In writing, he held the pen at the bend of the elbow. As he grew up he became greatly interested in husbandry, was an active haymaker, could use the reins, and was so good a shot that he carried off the first prize at the village fete. He has left a widow and four children amply provided for.

—

THE Japanese women advertise the number of their years by the arrangement of their hair. Girls from 9 to 15 wear their hair interlaced with red crape, describing a half circle around the head, the forehead being left free, with a curl at each side. From 15 to 30 the hair is dressed very high on the forehead, and put up at the back in the shape of a fan or butterfly, with interlacings of silver cord and a decoration of colored balls. Beyond 30 a woman twists her hair around a shell-pin, placed at the back of her head. Widows also designate themselves, and whether or not they desire to marry again. This is a fashion which American women will never adopt.

—

THE two highest salaried Governors of the United States are those of New York and Pennsylvania, who receive $10,000 a year each. The next highest are those of California, Nevada and Illinois, who get $6,000 each. The Governors of Colorado, Indiana, Kentucky, Missouri, New Jersey, Virginia and Wisconsin are paid $5,000 each. Most of the other Governors are paid from $1,500 to $4,000, which latter figure is the sum allowed by the great State of Ohio. Most of the Southern States pay $3,000 or $4,000. The lowest salaries paid are to the Governors of Vermont, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Michigan, who receive $1,000 a year each.

—

THE tide of European emigration has for so many years sent its main current in the direction of the United States, that we have almost come to think that nobody goes anywhere else. This, however, is far from true. Of late the influx of Germans to the large English cities has been such as to cause some inconvenience. The immigrants come well equipped with such English as can be learned in the German public schools, and are fully competent to undertake any ordinary clerical work, while their habits of industry and frugality enable them to underbid English competitors. Again, it has lately been ascertained that over 1,000,000 persons of foreign birth are now resident in France, a tolerably large percentage when we remember that its very existence until quite recently has been unsuspected. Belgians head the list, furnishing half the total, but the immigation from Italy is on the increase, as is also that from Spain, and even from Germany.

—

AN English correspondent draws attention to the increasing employment of girls in various business occupations in London, and adds the suggestion that instruction in the details of commercial clerks' work might be advantageously imparted in classes formed for that purpose, and instructed under proper supervision. There is, perhaps, no more interesting member of our youth than the well-mannered, well-taught girl, whose energies are addressed to the important work of earning her living. Perhaps no city in the world can present a more agreeable spectacle than London during the early morning hours, in which quiet, neatly-dressed and scrupulously well-behaved girls go in great numbers on foot, by omnibus, or rail, to their various places of business. The girl of this class and period is a distinct and valuable product of rational education, and, as an embodiment of capable and modest self-reliance, is a clear addition to the civilizing influences of the time.

—

THERE is first the infant kiss. The tiny lips, and little, passionless face is molded into smiles by a kiss—the first lesson in the language of life—and as it rests in the arms that are made of tenderness, and pillowed on a mother's bosom, who shall fathom the deep, earnest love and proud hope of a mother's kiss? And when, too pure for earth, the little spirit wings its way to the somewhere unknown land, does it not seem as if her very life would go out with the last sad kiss to the pulseless clay? Should the infant be spared to be her stay in the decline of life, "mother's last kiss" will be a spell to keep the shool-boy in the right path when other home influences are forgotten or fled. And, in later years, "mother's last kiss" may prove the salvation of many a man whose lips have long been sullied and defiled by impurity. Though its influence may slumber, it can never be effaced, and through good or ill the memory of that kiss will continue until he sleeps to wake no more.

—

A MEDICAL writer says that the ignorance of most people of nursing and medical treatment, even of the simplest kind, is most profound. "I remember," he writes, "some years ago being called to an Israelite, who had fainted, and whom I found surrounded by a score of friends, the outer circle howling, and the inner endeavoring to cram teaspoonfuls of jam into his mouth. I remember educated people sorrowing because their relative—ill with typhoid fever—could not eat mutton chop. I remember cases of measles and chicken-pox sent to school in cold and wretched weather. I remember patients lost whom nursing would have saved, and many saved by nursing alone. And remembering these—remembering a host of similar, or worse than those recorded, of ignorance, foolishness, and recklessness, multiplying incredibly the misery and wretchedness in a world so burdened with them already, 'Who will make himself or herself a blessing to overworked and aggravated doctors by teaching people common sense regarding these matters?'"

OLD LETTERS.

The rain was blowing in quick white gusts;
With yellow leaves the air was darkling;
The storm was moaning of death and graves;
No moon dared shine, no star was sparkling.

The elms were roaring around the house
With a frantic grief and a wild despair;
The wind gave a warning. Banshee wail
From the boggared wood that was all but bare.

Then I opened the casket once so dear,
And took out the letters I've kissed so oft;
The paper was still by the rose-leaves tinged;
Its breath was like here—so sweet and so soft.

Slowly as one at a sacrifice,
With face averted, I fed the flame;
Ruthless and cruel, the serpent tongues;
Swift and eager and leaping came.

Hopes and joys, they were dreams and air!
I sat down sad by my funeral pile,
And heard the roar of the ruthless fire,
And "God forgive her!" I moaned the while.

There was a blaze, and a crimson glare,
A wavering pyramid, tall and keen;
Then there came a waft of smouldering smoke,
That rose in a circling, vapory screen.

Meleager's fagot—so went my life,
Spring and Summer, and Autumn, too;
Its daybreak promise, its riper thoughts,
Its tears of sorrow, its sunshine dew.

I sat like a mourner beside the pile—
All I had loved had passed away;
Nothing for me but to hope for flowers
To bloom and to gladden my burial clay.

There lay my life, a crinkling heap
Of curling ashes that fell to naught,
A glitter of one or two passing sparks—
That was all that my love had brought.

The Lights of Rockby.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE LOVE OF LANCELEE," "LOVE'S DEVOTION," "FOR MONEY'S SAKE," "STRANGERS STILL," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER VI.—[CONTINUED.]

PERHAPS had her husband sought her and seen how real the trouble seemed to her, matters might easily have been mended by a few loving words and kind caresses; but like an obstinate man he was, he had set his mind to the notion that she must be left to herself to cure her of what he called "her tantrums."

Certainly he listened by her door hoping that she might summon him.

"Poor foolish pet," he murmured at the closed door, which he gazed at regretfully, "why can't she volunteer the kiss of peace? Well, I'll give her till to-morrow, then if she won't give in, I suppose I had better make a virtue of necessity and see what a little judicious coaxing can do. Perhaps I was hard, and she is so silly sensitive and jealous.

"Oh, Lottie, you are like the fellow's sweetheart in the song 'Red as a rose.' I suppose we must take dinner *tete-a-tete* today; my lady is still a victim to the vapors. How is Ida to night?"

"Oh! superb, and such a monkey for a romp. Really Prince, a nursery is a great institution in a house."

"Yes," he answered gaily, "if the trees put forth shoots to blossom; but come dinner is served. I saw Talents as I came home; he promised me my revenge at billiards to-night, so I am glad to see you wearing that pretty pink gown."

After Fred arrived they spent a very pleasant evening in the billiard-room. Rhode, seated in her own room above, crying over her baby's dimpled face, heard their light careless laughter float out on the still night air, and hardened her heart against softening influences that twined about her a garland of sweet memories breathing of love and home. Placing her sleeping baby in the nurse's arms, she whispered—

"You will not fail me, Kitty? Remember, double wages, a big present, and a mother's life-long gratitude."

"Yes, ma'am, but I wish you would wait a day or two; I am afraid you will regret this hasty step; 'tis like taking a leap in the dark. If you will go, why I'll go with you for the sake of this wee thing here; but perhaps you'll think different in the daylight, the shadows that frighten us at night always go away at the dawn."

Rhode closed the door impatiently, she was in no mood just now to listen to the girl's platitudes. An hour later, Lottie in vain sought for admittance; the room was silent, and Lottie went to bed with an uneasy sense of coming evil. The next morning she awoke later than usual and found the breakfast parlor vacant; Maggie brought in the tea-urn, and said as she did so—

"The Master went out at five this morning, miss; he has gone fishing, I fancy, with Mr. Talents and Fisher Will."

"I believe you are right, Maggie, but where is Mrs. Rookby?"

"Oh! she is still in her room, miss; nurse, who went out with baby an hour ago, said she did not wish to be disturbed."

"Very well, Maggie, I will carry her up some breakfast myself, presently; get some devilled chicken ready, and prepare a cup of chocolate."

After drinking a cup of tea and eating an egg, Lottie left the table, and stepped out of the French window into the flower garden.

After plucking a pretty bunch of flowers she returned indoors to find Maggie waiting with a tempting little repast.

Lottie laid the flowers on top of the silver dish-cover and carried it upstairs, singing as she went; she knocked at Rhode's door smartly, but received no reply: thinking she was asleep, she entered, and found the room empty.

Placing the tray down on a chair by the bed she closed the door and hastened over to the entrance to the little bath room, calling upon Rhode, quietly.

Still no reply; and hastily opening the door, she found that room empty too.

Thinking she had gone out, she was about to leave the room, when a large white envelope attracted her attention; it was pinned conspicuously to the pincushion, and upon reading the inscription, Lottie found that it was addressed to herself in Rhode's uneven hand.

Hastily snatching it up, she tore it open, and read the contents; then sinking into a chair, she exclaimed—

"Gone! Oh! the mad jealous fool? Prince will never forgive her; oh! what shall I do? How could she be so wicked? What a scandal it will make. Well, I must do something, that's certain, but what? Oh, I know." Picking up the letter again, she saw there was nothing enclosed to Prince.

"I won't give it to him yet," she thought "No, I'll go and find her, and bring her back."

Hastily summoning Maggie, whom she knew could be relied on she could by saying in the servants' hall that her mistress had been sent for by a sick friend; then she hastily prepared to follow her.

At the station she interviewed the porters and found that a lady bearing Rhode's description had gone by an early train to London.

Lottie took a ticket and went by the express to Paddington; from thence, by enquiring, to Charing Cross.

Arriving there she stood uncertain what to do further, when her attention was attracted by a face she knew; rushing across the platform, she stumbled against everyone in her way, but succeeded in laying hold of a railway rug which a diminutive gentleman carried on his arm; they were at the door of the first-class waiting-room, as Lottie said, in her clear though excited voice—

"Oh! Sir Perceval, I am so glad to meet you, 'tis a stroke of luck; I want your help to find—

"Why bless the man, what's the matter? You shake like an infant earth-quake. Let us go into this room, where I can talk to you quietly: I am sure you are ill."

"No, my dear young lady, it is nothing: merely the sight of you so unexpectedly. Don't go in there it is so close; come outside, you can talk just as well there."

Lottie laughed.

"Well, the sight of me must be as powerful as a galvanic shock: I never saw a man so startled, but I'd rather not leave the station, if you don't mind. I have a notion that it is somewhere hereabout that I shall find what I seek for. Whereabouts is the hotel?"

"Which hotel?" said Sir Perceval somewhat sullenly.

"Charing Cross Hotel," replied Lottie.

"Just outside; come, I will show you," said Sir Perceval, eagerly.

Lottie lifted her eyebrows, surprised at this haste; then she caught sight of the corner of a shawl which he carried under the rug, and plucking at it sharply she exclaimed—

"Why, you've got Rhode's shawl there! Tell me where she is; I am sure you know."

Lottie took firm hold of his arm as she spoke, a stormy light flashing from her fine eyes.

"Pardon me, Miss Lottiemore, but you are mistaken; that is not your cousin's shawl, and I know nothing of the lady; allow me to go, I have an appointment."

"I shall not leave you till you tell me where to find Rhode, you are speaking falsely, I can see it in your eyes."

She shook him slightly as she spoke, in her impatience and excitement.

He looked angry.

Just then the door of the waiting-room opened and a tall stately figure closely veiled and cloaked, stood before them.

Lottie sprang forward with a glad cry.

"Oh! Rhode, thank God I have found you!"

"Don't make a scene here, Lottie what do you want of me? Do you imagine I am to be dragged back, like a truant child?"

"I imagine you will allow yourself to be persuaded to behave like a decent, sensible woman.

"Come, Mrs. Rookby," said Sir Perceval, impatiently, "we shall miss our train; tell this impetuous young person that you will write."

"The young person's impetuousity will cause her to box your ears if you make any more remarks. Come, Rhode, tell me what is the meaning of your traveling with this gentleman? Depend on it, wherever you go I shall follow, if it's as far as New Zealand."

"I wonder," interposed Sir Perceval, "that you recognized this young woman's right to control your movements; and should have thought now that your husband was the only proper person to instruct you as to the propriety of any step you might choose to take."

Sir Perceval said this savagely, trying to control his temper, which was aroused by the delay.

Rhode took the cue quickly, saying—

"I will submit to no one's interference except my husband's. If you, Lottie, choose to make yourself ridiculous by following us, why, yours will be the inconvenience."

"Indeed," said Lottie; "but suppose I stop you on your husband's authority, and tell you that he will be here in a few seconds to take this matter in hand himself? Do you imagine that such a man will brook this betrayal tamely? Not he. I wouldn't be in your place for a pension, when he catches you with that little wizened man. Why, he'll kill him."

Lottie said this so close to the little man's face, that he drew back as though expecting she would bite him.

Rhode looked perplexed, and Sir Perceval, drawing her aside, tried, with all his power of persuasion, to prevail on her to give Lottie the slip and get away; but Rhode, in answer, said—

"But how about the baby? Nurse promised to meet me here."

"Yes, yes, my own; but does it not strike you that she may be detained; and time is precious."

He brought his handsome, eager face very near her own as he spoke, and Lottie seeing this, allowed her temper to master her, and hitting him smartly with her umbrella she said—

"Come now, Rhode, dismiss this poor little fellow, and let us go somewhere and get some tea, I'm famished."

Sir Perceval looked blank, as Rhode answered—

"Well, suppose we discuss it over a cup of tea. We can continue our journey, if we feel inclined by a later train."

Lottie felt that she was in a great fix, but determined to face it out bravely, so she stood quietly by Rhode's side.

"How was it you caught me so nicely, Lottie?"

"I found some torn scraps of paper, which, by placing together, I made out meant, 'Meet me at Charing Cross Hotel, and so end all your troubles by beginning a new life with your devoted lover.' Nice words were they not, for a respectable married woman and a mother, to receive from a man she had known six months?"

Rhode was silent; then, after a while, asked—

"How about baby?"

Lottie smiled.

"I knew we could catch you through her, if everything else failed; so I told Maggie not to let her out of sight till we returned."

In the hotel, when Lottie got Rhode to herself in one of the bed-chambers, she persuaded her with such force of conviction, that that night they slept together with their arms around each other's necks, and Lottie knew the dark hour of temptation had passed.

Sir Perceval, who now had begun to dislish the idea of eloping had left them, after Lottie had told him that "it was like his impudence to think that he could have kidnapped a huge creature like Rhode, without detection."

She quite agreed with Rhode, that it would be madness to return to Prince just now with any idea of reconciliation.

Lottie, with all the tenderness of her great heart, stirred by Rhode's despondency and regret, talked to her gently and lovingly of the great sin from which God's Providence had rescued her, and promised to keep her secret always, so that Prince might imagine that she had but left him in a spirit of perverseness, which Edgar Poe rightly classes as "one of the primitive impulses of the human heart."

"For your child's sake and for the love between you which marriage has sanctioned, it is best that he should never know how unworthy you were of his love, and the holy names of wife and mother," said Lottie, with some severity "and some day, when you have lived this into a painful memory, you may thank God, on you knees, that you have a good man's love."

But Rhode, just now, was not in a mood to be talked into repentance.

She was harassed, worn out, worried, and had a frightful cold, which had settled on her chest, and made her so ill that any journey just then seemed out of the question.

A letter, too, which they received from Prince, written in his most stubborn mood, did not mend matters, for it told her sternly, that since she had chosen to take herself off without leave, she was to remain away, as he would not receive her again as mistress of Rookby.

Lottie read this through, and then said, cheerfully:

"Well, since he casts you off, I'll not desert you; we will live together somewhere in this great city, till he has learned the value of his womankind."

And so they did.

CHAPTER VII.

ON one of the airy heights of Highgate, there stands a pretty cottage and nursery grounds all in admirable condition—a very paradise of flowering plants; and in the homely little cottage Lottie and Rhode have domiciled themselves.

They are dull and lonely sometimes, for they have passed through a weary winter season with but little to cheer them save Lottie's brave spirit.

No word of reluctance had come to them from the lonely man at Rookby, whose only comfort was his little child.

Once only had he written, and then it was to ask Lottie to release him from his bond age at Rookby by taking up her proper position as mistress there.

But Lottie refused, for Fred Talents, who had found them out and paid them rare and valued visits, told her that Prince was seized with a mania for gold-digging, and that he would start at once were it not for his duties on the Rookby estate, which had grown and prospered during the last year to a great extent.

Rhode's beauty and spirit had been chastened and purified during the long winter months, for she had been very ill, and was still delicate.

During her long, wearing illness Lottie had tended her with all the loving patience of an affectionate sister, till Rhode at last learned to value her noble, unselfish nature rightly.

Lottie had grown very compassionate to Rhode.

She pitied her loneliness, and her remorse; and, more than all, she pitied the great yearning mother's love that hungered for the sight of her sweet child's face.

But Prince said:

"She has left of her own free will, and she should bear the punishment of absence."

But this time of trial was teaching Rhode a lesson which was slowly but surely fashioning her wayward nature into a more perfect life.

Yet Rhode neither grew strong nor cheerful, although, thanks to the severe teaching of life's school of adversity, she slowly but surely came to look upon her past self with abhorrence, and to rely with ever-increasing faith on the promise of a more perfect life.

In reply to Lottie's anxious inquiries as to the state of Rhode's health, the old doctor said:

"It is pining, dear, that does the mischief; make her happy, and you will make her well."

Lottie brooded so long over this that the result was a letter to Fred Talents, begging him to see if he could intercede with her cousin for this repentant wife and mother, whose craving for her child kept her in a perpetual fever.

True, there came long, gossiping letters from Maggie, full of all that befell the little one, who was doing well; and of the moody, lonely man, whose only consolation she was.

And Rhode, reading them, would sigh and say:

"It is right that I should suffer."

"Of course it is," Lottie would reply, briskly; "but not always. You know, dear, punishment, like all other ills, has its limits."

One golden summer sunset, after a day of hard work among their sick and poor, the two women rested in their long, quiet, garden, admiring the flowers and enjoying their scent, and talking gravely and placidly of the past, when the sound of a hansom driving furiously aroused them, and looking, they saw Fred Talents drive up.

Lottie went to welcome him, frightened at his grave face.

She drew him quietly into the little sitting-room, saying:

"Something terrible has happened, Fred; tell me at once what it is, or Rhode will be here."

"Your are right, my dear; something very sad and serious has happened and to your cousin; prepare yourself, for you loved him, too."

Lottie put her hand to her side, and then said.

"Yes, and I love him still; but it is as a dear brother; tell me quickly what has happened to him!"

Fred put both his hands on her shoulders, and drawing her towards him into the light, said, looking keenly into her great dark eyes:

"Lottie, Prince and I were out shooting yesterday, when he stumbled, and, his gun going off, lost him the sight of an eye, besides inflicting other injuries. Oh, my dear, he is very ill, and the doctor says he may lose the sight of the other eye. He of all others so little fitted to endure the life of inaction the loss will inflict."

Lottie trembled, her face grew pallid, and a stifled shriek escaped from her lips as she said:

"Oh, how shall I break the terrible news to Rhode!"

"There is no need to tell her," said a pained, sad voice, "for she has heard every word."

And Rhode stood before them, like one newly risen from the dead, so unearthly were her looks.

"Take me to him," she said, holding out her hands; "for my place is by his side, now that he needs me, for he is my husband, and oh, how I do love him!"

* * * * * *

Again the scene of our story must be laid in Lottie's cozy little room at Rookby.

It is darkened now, and Prince's stalwart figure lies prone upon a couch, shaken by a great grief.

"I tell you, Lottie, she never loved me. I was tricked, decoyed, betrayed. All you tell me of her altered nature goes for nothing, for see, she is not altered enough to humble herself for love of me, and though I despise myself for the admission, I know that I love her.

"Her cursed beauty enslaved me. Ah, well, my punishment has come, for I can never look upon her face again. I know all that you saved her from, you brave, good girl, and bless you for it; but, oh, Lottie, I am wretched—wretched—for I am blind. Blind, deserted, and doubly disgraced; oh, God of mercy, let me die!"

Then, more calmly, he continued:

"I suppose, that Rhode is glad she discarded her fetters before they became more irksome? What would she do with a blind man?"

A cry of anguish cleft the stillness, as Rhode, with her baby in her arms, crept to her husband's side.

Passing her babe to Lottie, who quietly left the room, Rhode fell on her knees.

Touching her husband with loving hands, she took his poor head and laid it against her heart, which beat as wildly as the distant sea.

Lottie, returning an hour later, found the wife still on her knees by her husband's

side, but his arms were about her now, and her lips were pressed to his.

Lottie heard her say:

"Not deserted now, darling, for I, who love you dearer than life, am with you. I am a better woman now, and fit to be your comfort.

"I will be your light, if it should please God, against all our prayers, to afflict you with darkness.

"It will be my happiness to be your guide, your comfort, and between us, as a bond of peace and love, there is our little child."

Then seeing Lottie, she said, joyfully:

"Oh, my dear, I am so happy, for I have told him all; and, out of his great compassion, he has forgiven me and taken me again to his heart."

"You dear old thing," said Lottie, hugging him as if she was a young bear. "I always said you were not half so sulky as you seemed. There, let me run away and tell Fred—he'll be so glad.

"Now, you will allow that clever London doctor we told you about to visit you, won't you? for Rhode's sake, for I am sure you don't want to make her doggie to the blind man if there is a chance for a more lively occupation for her."

"There could not be a higher occupation, Lottie," said Rhode.

"Of course not; you did not think I meant to be unkind. I wanted to reason that naughty fellow into sensible action about his eyes."

"Ah! we know how much your rough speeches mean, Lottie," said Prince, holding out his hand; and Lottie, giving it a good squeeze, left husband and wife alone, while she, with a shabby hat on her determinedly rough head, walked briskly up the cliff-walk to where, in the gloaming, shone the red lights of Rockby.

The sight of them brought back vividly the night when she had braved the danger of the storm.

As she neared the signal-box she felt a little lonely, "out in the cold," as she would have expressed it; so she sat down on the bridge and indulged in that, to her, rare and genuine luxury, a good cry.

So engaged was she in this novel occupation, that she did not notice a young man in the dress of a coast-guard, who stood back in the shadow, watching her.

Just as she gave her nose a final blow, and rubbed her eyes into a vivid red, he came up, saying kindly—

"Why, what on earth is the matter with you, old lady? I never saw you cry such a tempest before."

"So you have been watching me, have you, Mr. Busybody?

"Much good may it do you to see a fellow creature miserable."

Her looks were stormy now, and, pulling herself together, she stamped her foot, saying—

"You know I hate anyone to see me cry, and it was real mean of you to look at me."

She was going away with great dignity, but Fred Talents said—

"Don't be bad-tempered, there's a dear, but tell me how you are getting on yonder."

"I'll be just as bad-tempered as I please, sir; and if you want to know how they are getting on—I suppose you mean my cousin—let me to tell you to find out. I left them hugging each other, like a couple of polar bears."

"Did you, now? Show me how they did it, will you?

"I should like to see your idea of a good hug."

Lottie drew her tall figure up to its full height with silent disgust, remarking, as she held on her hat, for the breeze had freshened—

"That some people were vulgar as well as mean."

Fred was silent after this for some time, till she stumbled over a stone, then, in saving her, he managed to get hold of her hand, and said—

"I don't see why you should be ill-tempered with me.

"Now tell me, like a sensible girl, what has put you out?"

"I am not at all sensible, I fear," said Lottie, fighting with a sob; "for I was fretting, because I know I ought to leave dear old Rockby.

"Do you know it has taken a deal of the conceit out of me to realize, as I have done, that perhaps it would have been better if I had left Rockby directly uncle died. Married folks ought to live alone, but you see I am so lonely, and so very selfish too, I think, or I should not be happy in their happiness."

"Well, I shall be all right when I get back to my flowers and my sick people, and soon settle down into a comfortable old maid on the hills of Highgate."

"God forbid," said Fred. "You will never go back there, my pet, unless it is to spend your honeymoon."

"What do you mean, Fred?"

"Mean? Why, to marry you. I have been patient, dear."

"So you have, Fred, and do you know I have a good mind to take you at your word, if only to plague you."

"Do, my dear; you will never have such another chance."

"Don't be conceited, sir."

"I hope to have cause for more conceit before I go home to-night."

With this Fred had the audacity to go through the polar bear performance, and Lottie seemed to like it.

* * * * * * *

"I am happy to be able to assure you, madam, that your husband will, with proper treatment, regain the use of his eyes."

Rhode's face lighted up as she thanked the kind-faced clever man, who seemed a little taken aback by an impetuous young person grasping his hand and wringing it with a sturdy strength of feeling, as she said—

"Oh! you delightful man, to give me such good tidings."

This was Lottie returned from her honeymoon on Highgate Hills, looking as bright and brown as ever.

She decided that the doctor must stay to dinner, and he did, hardly knowing which he admired most, his gentle-mannered hostess or her stylish friend, who was really such a fine-hearted woman, and who sang like an angel, and, best of all, had no nonsense about her.

That night Lottie looked out on the Red Lights of Rockby with Fred's arms about her, and they recalled with subdued voices that night of horror long ago when Lottie had leapt up from the dream and found it verified.

"You are sure you don't regret giving up this fine old place, Fred."

"No, dear, why should I, when I have a finer in a prettier country? Besides, I feel like you, that this being the birth place of Prince, is more rightly his. He is a fine fellow."

"He is indeed; but I know a finer," and Lottie rubbed her cheek against her husband's beard, and continued, "I am glad you came into that property, Fred."

"Mercenary little wretch," he said, smiling.

"Well, you see, dear, it is so much easier for Prince to accept this of us, knowing that we can afford to be generous; and it is nice to know we can come when we like to this old house by the sea and look upon the Red Lights of Rockby together."

"By the by, Lottie, I heard from the vicar yesterday that your friend, Sir Perceval, has been hooked at last by a long-nosed æsthetic spinster of uncertain age and temper; and really, by his account, he is to be sincerely pitied."

"Ugh! the little wretch; serve him right!"

"Why, what has he done to deserve your dislike, pet?"

"Plenty, my dear; but consider it a masonic secret, and get to bed."

[THE END.]

Leonie.

BY E. LINWOOD SMITH.

"MISS CAMERON."

Leonie Cameron, lazily looking out of a bow window upon a garden flaming with autumn tints and sunset glow, lifted a pair of soft dark eyes to Mrs. Tollman's face.

It was an anxious face just at that moment, and being usually full of placid content, the anxiety was very apparent to Leonie.

So after her first careless glance, she straightened herself in her low chair, and said, quietly, yet with every appearance of interest—

"What is the matter?"

An awkward pause followed that question.

Mrs. Tollman fidgeted under the inquiring glance of the dark eyes, cleared her throat twice, and finally said with nervous emphasis—

"John Furber."

Miss Cameron's face seemed to freeze.

It was a beautiful face, with pride for a leading expression.

Sweetness lurked in the mouth, intellect beamed from the radiant dark eyes, but pride shadowed all.

It carried the small head gracefully erect, it swept the folds of the rich dresses with a regal motion.

It touched the small patrician hands, and was evident in the well-modulated tones of the refined voice.

"There," Mrs. Tollman said, despairingly, "I've made you mad already, and haven't said anything."

"I am not mad," Leonie answered, and there certainly lurked a smile in her mouth at the good woman's consternation. "But you have not told me what troubles you."

"It's—it's—John, Miss Cameron, and——" then rapidly, as if the words were forced by a fear of her own inability to finish her self-appointed task, she hurried on.

"He's my nephew, miss, as you know, though his father is a rich man, very rich, and John is above his mother's place in her life.

"She's dead, and John was spoiled somewhere between the year she died and two years ago.

"I don't know where, but he took to bad ways.

"He was brought up an idler upon his father's money, and from idleness to drinking, gambling and bad ways is an easy road.

"His father is a hard man and he thrust him out near a year ago. Disinherited him.

"He came here, for I love him. I've nothing else to love; husband and children in the grave-yard, so I love John."

There was a piteous pleading in the woman's face, but Leonie's was blank, save for an air of polite interest.

"He was most desperate when he came here, but I cheered him up a little.

"But—but—oh, Miss Cameron, you know what I want to say.

"You are beautiful, rich—a lady far above me in education and position, and only staying here for country quiet.

"I've no right to find fault, but—but—don't flirt with John.

"He is in trouble, despondent, disinherited, and he's falling in love with you as fast as he can. I believe, if you play with him, he will kill himself, body and soul."

Fairly out of breath with her own earnest utterance, Mrs. Tollman paused, looking pleadingly in Leonie Cameron's face.

The expression of polite interest never wavered, as that young lady said—

"If I understand you aright, you wish me to ignore your nephew. It is not easy, as he is in your house, so I had better leave it."

"Goodness!" cried the widow, aghast at this interpretation of her words. "I never meant that. Where can you find another boarding-place near here?"

"I can return to London."

"I've put my foot in it. John will never forgive me," said Mrs. Tollman, disconsolately.

But there was no sympathy in Leonie's face, and she turned away at last, perplexed and more anxious than ever.

And Leonie, sinking back into her chair again, looked at the sunset clouds and variegated foliage, and thought perhaps it was time to return to London.

She has come to S——, weary with a round of fashionable life, tired of flattery, dancing, flirting, and she had found rest and quiet under Mrs. Tollman's motherly care.

She was rich—richer far than the landlady had any idea of; but she had no near relatives, only a second cousin to keep her lonely home, and play propriety.

Society constituted itself her amateur guardian, and lying back in her cushioned chair, in the sunset glow, she wondered indolently what society would say about John Furber.

It would grant him a rare perfection of manly beauty of face and form, and forgive the evident traces of dissipation, if it was only known that he was the son of a rich man, and had been educated an idler by profession.

But in what holy horror it would turn away with uplifted hands when it was known that he was disinherited, with no home but a room in the house of a widowed aunt eking out her narrow income by taking boarders.

It would smile at his biting sarcasms, his brilliant conversation, his cynical sneers, if he was reinstated in his father's favor, but how rude these would be in a poor man.

Leonie, from thinking of society opinion, quite unconsciously glided into considering her own.

This dark-browed man had made a fair portion of her summer pleasure for three months, had been her cavalier in many country walks, drives and rides, had quoted poetry under trees, sung in a superb baritone upon murmuring waters, looked into her eyes on a moonlit porch and whispered delicately-worded flattery.

No more than many other men had done.

A beauty and rich, Miss Cameron had looked upon more than one languishing suitor and forgotten him when her amusement wearied her.

Scarcely a flirt, for she encouraged no downright love-making, but a beautiful, fascinating woman, who wounded hearts with merely careless grace.

Musing in the sunset, it was impressed upon the proud heart that unconsciously she had poisoned a life that was already sinking.

There were capabilities for better things than dissipation and suicide in John Furber, and she shivered as she thought he might be upon a dangerous precipice, waiting for the clasp of the hand to draw him back, or its reptile to thrust him over.

She passed in review her host of male friends, and found none who had wakened her to hours of such keen pleasure as John Furber had given her.

She tried to recall one mind whose grasp of intellect had dwarfed her own as his had done, who had met her fairly in so many arguments and worsted her, and she could only remember soft flattery of her "wonderful mind."

Finally, lifting her eyes with a soft sigh, she saw him leaning against a tree opposite the low window, looking at her.

A vivid flush stained her cheek, as he said—

"What can you have been thinking of? You have not stirred for half an hour. Only that your eyes were open, I should have thought you asleep."

"Your powers of observation are marvellous," she answered, lightly. "I was dreaming."

"Of what?"

"The world in general, my world in particular. It is almost time I returned there."

She was prepared for some polite show of regret, but not for the ghastly change in his face.

She shuddered, remembering his aunt's words.

"Going away! Why, of course you would be soon," he said, trying to speak carelessly, while his eyes hungrily devoured her face, and his white, parched lips were drawn as if in sharp physical pain.

"I have been here three months," she said, feeling her own heart ache at his misery.

"Yes, yes! You will go, certainly."

"And you," she said, very gently, "you will be in the city, I presume. I should be glad to welcome you to my house."

"No," he said, harshly; "I will not take such advantage of your kindness, I am a man your friends would tell you to shun, Miss Cameron—a man who has wasted life till it is too late to take up the threads again. You do not know, perhaps, that my aunt keeps me here from charity."

"I know you have offended your father," she answered; "but you are a man, scarcely thirty, and it is cowardly to talk of despair at your age."

Leonie's words cut him like a whip-lash.

The dark blood mounted to his forehead as he repeated—

"Cowardly! I might fight the world yet, but," and here his tone was bitter, and yet strangely pathetic, "the battle is scarcely worth winning.

"What would I gain? Money? I do not value it. Position? I have thrown it behind me. I have played the fool, and I must take a fool's wages."

"I will not have you say so," she said, roused to an earnestness she never had intended to betray. "You shall not throw away your life."

A hope sprang to his eyes, now there, lightning them to dazzling radiance.

"Miss Cameron—Leonie," he cried, "were there a prize to win, were one heart's hope centred upon me, I would trample down these demons of temptation. I would prove myself a man if I had any motive."

There was no mistaking the prayer, in his eyes, the pleading in his voice.

Only for one moment, close now to the low window, before a hand like a snow-flake fell upon his shoulders, a voice low and sweet, murmured low in his ear—

"Be a man, for my sake."

She was gone before he spoke again, and he wandered off to the woods to muse upon a possibility of this new life.

The next day Mrs. Tollman lost her summer boarder.

Society, languidly contemplating Miss Cameron for the next three years, found her eccentric.

She was gay and grave by flashes, fascinating in either mood, but she was mysteriously unapproachable.

The bravest suitor found himself met at the point where friendly attentions merge into lover's devotion, by a wall of icy reserve that was impassable.

She never flirted, but she had the reputation of a flirt, because she was popular and admired, and remained single till she was twenty-seven.

She was known to be truthful, and she had distinctly told several inquisitive lady friends that she was not engaged, so there was not even the spice of romance in the gossip.

Surely she was not "disappointed," for never had the bright serenity of her beauty been more unclouded.

S—— knew her not in those three years, but Mrs. Tollman was the happy recipient of various hampers of city delicacies from her, and would acknowledge the same by letter.

One of these, dated three years after the beautiful Miss Cameron left S—— after elaborately thanking that young lady for a hamper of dainties, added—

"Do you remember my nephew, John Furber? He left me the day after you did and I fretted more than a little. But he took a turn for good, Heaven be thanked. He worked himself up, and to-day he writes me he has made friends with his father again, and is to be taken partner in a commercial house. His father's to buy it, but John's earned a place too by hard, honest work. Oh, my dear I'm happier than ever I thought to be. Perhaps you've heard of the house in London that John is in. But I'll tire you writing about my own affairs. I wouldn't only I thought perhaps you'd remember John."

"In London," Leonie murmured: "so near me all those three years, and yet never seeking me. Was I too bold? Did I drive him away by showing my heart too plainly? Well, even so, I am glad I gave him the first start towards an honorable manhood. Remember him? Yes, Mrs. Tollman, I do remember John."

She had folded the letter, and was dressing for the opera, when a visitor was announced.

"What a barbarous hour," she murmured, not looking at the card. "In a few moments, Jane."

She was robed in her fleecy dress of white lace, over pale blue silk, had clasped diamonds on throat and wrists, and in the little ears, when as she took the opera cloak from the maid's hands, she looked at the card—

"John Furber."

A great heart throb sent the blood over her brow and neck; then it faded, leaving only a soft flut upon the fair cheeks, and in the dark eyes a light of happiness harmonizing well with the smiling lips.

She looked like some visitant from another world in the radiance of her beauty, as she came across the wide drawing-room to the window where he stood.

He had not heard her light step, but he turned when she was near, showing the stamp of his better life in his noble face.

He held out his hand, looked earnestly into her face, and seeing she spoke only a happy truth as, taking it, she said—

"I am glad to see you."

"Leonie," he said, "you gave me a hope, three years ago, that has borne me above temptation and suffering to a position where I am not ashamed to look any man in the face. Leonie, you bade me——"

Blushing brightly she took up the words as he paused—

"To be a man John for my sake."

"And I obeyed you my love, my darling. I have come for my reward, Leonie, loving

you with all the strength of my heart, daring now, to ask for your love in return."

So society had a ripple of a sensation in a fashionable wedding, when John Furber married Miss Leonie Cameron.

But only you and I, reader know the romance of that summer in S——, or how John Furber redeemed his manhood for Leonie's sake.

The Norlake Siren.

BY JESSA KRIKORIAN.

"A GHOST, child! what nonsense art thou talking? It were better for thee to gossip less with old Dame Margarie, for her foolish babble has well nigh turned thy head."

[illegible] was regal, beautiful, woman, in her crimson velvet, embroidered with pearls, fell round her royalty, strings of precious stones braided her raven hair, and on the bare white throat that carried her graceful head so proudly stone diamonds, brilliant enough for a queen's dower—just such a contrast as would mark a fair field-daisy by the side of an imperial Dijon rose was the girl who stood before her: her blue eyes filled with tears, and her soft, childish mouth quivering.

"Nay, I'm ady," she cried, "it is no fa[illegible]ion, for in passing down the north wing but yesternight, methought I hear[illegible] a low talking. Had I known the passage below was haunted, I should have gone mad from very terror."

"A low talking, silly wench—are all dumb in this abbey; that a human voice should mare thee—as like some scullion holding tryst with one of our brave men-at-arms—and thou to come troubling me with thy tears. Pie upon thee, Alice. Fie!"

"Nay, nay, sweet lady, there's not a servant in this house would enter that passage after e'en. For they say the wicked nun walks nightly down that way."

"A nun! forsooth," and Lady Ursula laughed merrily.

"They have found thee a ghost in truth who would take a holy woman from her rest."

The girl crept close to her mistress.

"She was not holy, my lady, but most sinful. Years agone, when this same castle was an abbey in every truth, there lived a wicked abbess, who loved a youth right well, so well, that she granted him many a secret interview, till, at last, fearing he might boast her favor, she, one night, pushed him down the steps that lead to the dungeon keep, and left him there to die."

"This is a dark tale indeed, child, and it's to be hoped my lady abbess will never [illegible] as far as my bower chamber, for thy sake, at least."

"For holy Mary's sake, fair mistress, do not so jest; they say that ghosts can hear and may be, avenge, words spoken in their dishonor."

"Leave me, foolish girl; go mend the lace on my wristbands that our naughty hawk [illegible] and bring [illegible] go straight."

Left alone, my lady seated herself in the deep bodied mullioned window, and gazed long and sadly on the gay parterre below; the sunbeams sparkling in mad revel, waking the diamonds to prism blushes, could bring no joy into her deep dark eyes.

So would she sit, day after day, sorrowful and alone.

No trouble had thrown that shadow across her smooth brow; no sudden grief had agitated her young life—it was shame that battled with her pride, and daily murdered happiness.

Only three short months a bride; and this was the shame that ate her peace away—she had come to her lord an unsought bride; she had gone to him as payment for a debt, and that debt, a dark story of dishonor.

The Duke of Malvern was a gambler to the backbone, and evil tongues were not wanting that gave a darker name even to his excessive love of games of chance; but the scandal never gained ground.

The fair Ursula Mallet had been the bribe that silenced the only tongue that could have proclaimed her father's crime.

She knew when young Lord Craven sought her hand in marriage that he came straight from a stormy interview with the Duke, who had detected [illegible] the very act of [illegible] a clogged dice.

"For [illegible] my father's honor in thy power," she said, drawing her tall form up with regal dignity.

"My lady [illegible]," the lover pleaded, "never shall a sight of this sad matter pass my lips. Let it [illegible] me that I spoke so hastily; but Ursula Mia, thy father's honor is safe with me."

"Then I will be thy wife, sir," she answered, withdrawing herself hastily from [illegible] kept from [illegible], in the fierce pride that was her [illegible], burdening her heart against her own tender, dearing eyes; for she felt a [illegible] would rather have given the [illegible] fortune with a few inches of good steel between them than have bought [illegible] price with her love.

The marriage was hurried in most unorthodox fashion, for Hugh of Malvern could not sleep soundly till Ursula departed a bride from his roof; and then he breathed freely, knowing well that Craven having quartered his arms, would guard his secret with his life if it needs be.

But the fair Ursula was a woman, and a woman they say is ever to be won: so it came to pass that the love she had denied [illegible] with the strength of a true and [illegible] passion; but she had so taught her lover coldness that he never guessed the secret those dark eyes hid so ill, thinking that the flash that lit their well-like depth was aversion rather than affection; and when she shrank from his caresses, he fancied it was hatred instead of the diffidence that comes with unacknowledged love.

Poor Ursula, eating her heart away, suffered sorely; and when her husband spent his time in manly sport, and left her lonely thinking she was best pleased so, my lady wept long and sore, tears that she would have died rather than he should witness; and that is why the sunlight could find no joy in her dark eyes.

There is a stir in the courtyard below, a sound of music, and the tramp of many feet, and Ursula knows that her lord has [illegible] or heart beats quickly as she sees a [illegible] sight and graceful, dismounting from his steed—a young man, beautiful to effeminate

Looking at him, none would guess that before them stood the deadliest rapier in the court of good Queen Bess.

It was Marlborough who later on said that the dandies made his best soldiers—and no dandy could have been less warrior-like than Robert Craven; short golden curls half shaded his delicate, softly tinted face, their glitter contrasting the pale blue velvet of his doublet, with its trimmings of priceless point lace; and the small, white, jewelled hand that rested for a brief caressing moment on his palfrey's arched neck looked more fit for touching the spinet, than meeting death in the melee of war.

My lady waits for him to seek her bower chamber and claim a kiss of welcome from those proud red lips, full two hours pass and he comes not.

The courtyard is empty, and she feels chill as the early twilight creeps on.

Some one pushes wide the silken hangings of the door, and Ursula turns round, a glad greeting in her heart, but a woman of marble to all outward seeming.

"Thou art long in coming," she says, and then pauses, for it is not her husband, but her little maid, Alice, with her face white as the driven snow, in the light of the lamp she carries, and her eyes round with wild terror.

"Oh come, dear mistress, for our Lady's sake; convince thyself that this ill-omened house is haunted: They are there now, in the passage leading to the dungeon keep. I peeped over and saw their shadows—she with a wimple, and he a proper youth and [illegible]

"Peace, silly child!" said Ursula; "this matter were well looked into, for thy foolish fears will drive the crazed. Put down the lamp and come with me: I myself will prove these seeming ghosts. Nay! not a word—give me thy hand. If they be indeed ghosts then shall have my coffer of [illegible]

The two women walked hand in hand softly, in the darkness, down to the passage that led to the dungeon keep, and as they drew near they heard a low talking.

"Did I not tell thee so, my lady?" whispered the maid, struggling to free herself from her mistress's hold.

But Ursula, recognizing well [illegible] voices, quickly clasped her strong, [illegible] hand across Alice's mouth and drew the frightened child into the shadows; for there in the full moonlight that flooded through the [illegible] window stood her husband, and [illegible] was a woman clad in a nun's [illegible] garb."

"Sweet," Lord Craven was saying, "one who like thyself leads so holy a life, safe in the keeping of Mother Church, can have no cause for sorrow; and yet I marvel much to find thee so far from our good convent of St. Mary."

"Thou knowest little of the human heart, fair sir, when thou sayest I have no cause for sorrow," said the woman, in a strangely sweet voice.

"The heart! sweet lady?" he answered. "I am but an honest soldier at the court of our good queen; but methought a nun's heart at least was safe from all save spiritual cares."

"Ah!" she sighed; "would it were so gentle sir; would that a convent wall could shut out all that makes this world a paradise—or a hell. Would that I could kill love as easily as I can doff this lying garb."

She pushed the wimple from her brow, and as the black cloak slipped from her, Ursula saw herself—herself in another body—standing before her husband.

"Oh Ursula why didst thou play me this trick?" Lord Craven cried.

"Because I love thee!" said the other Ursula: and Lady Craven felt turned to stone at the sounding of that voice that mimicked every note of her own.

"Dear, dear heart! At last," he said, "thou hast owned thy precious love. My joy! my life!"

A smile of evil triumph spread over her face, as she nestled in his arms, pushing him gently towards the dungeon [illegible]

And suddenly it came like a revelation to the true Ursula, breaking the spell that held her silent—that this was the spirit of the wicked abbess; that with one loud cry she rushed forward to tear the guilty thing from her husband's arms; but her fingers clutched only empty air; for at that cry the ghost vanished, and Ursula, close pressed to her husband's heart, sobbing, told him of the peril he had escaped.

"And I was so happy, thinking that thou didst in very truth love me sweet Ursula!"

"So I do, Robert," she whispered; "[illegible] have I loved thee this many a long day."

With his arm thrown lovingly around his wife, Lord Craven turned to [illegible] and friends, who now thronged the passage, having come in all haste, alarmed by my lady's piercing cry.

He told them how, walking in the plaisance yonder, a white hand had beckoned to him: and how, entering the passage, he had met and held converse with a ghost who took his dear wife's form to betray him, and who would have surely sealed his doom, but for the good Lady Ursula's bravery.

"Come hither child," said my lady turning to the trembling tire-maid, "here is the collar I promised thee; and one more brave even than that I said should be thine."

Ursula unclasped the glittering diamonds from her slim white throat and fastened them round the girl's soft neck.

Some of the servants, using their lanterns, found that the steps leading into the dungeon keep had mostly rotted away, so had my lord fallen down, he would have perished of a surety.

Lying at the dungeon was a heap of human bones.

"We will give them Christian burial," said my lady: "for they are no doubt the bones of the poor youth the wicked abbess murdered."

But from the hour the poor skeleton was buried the siren of Norlake Abbey appeared no more.

Denounced.

BY RANDALL W. BAYLE.

"YOU are my slave. I say go, and you go: come and you come: do that, and you do it: unless, indeed"—and the moustached lip of the handsome young speaker curled into a sneering smile, "unless you prefer the consequences of disobedience. Be here, then, in this evergreen nook before five o'clock this evening

The girl grasped, as if for support, the arm of the rustic chair in which she sat, and looked up at the cold, hard face with a pitiful appeal in her soft blue eyes.

"Oh, Claude, why do you persecute me thus?" she tremulously cried. "You know I am innocent—you know I could not intentionally have injured a hair of her head. It was the saddest of sad accidents, though you hold the awful power to make it appear a black design."

"Innocent!" laughed her companion, mockingly. "Ha, ha! that is good! Did my other hand than yours send her to her death? I think not, since I was there. And did you not covet the love she had won, and hate her as only slighted women hate? And—and my innocent Blanche, are you not now proudly wearing her shoes? Is not Lithose slowly transferring his affection to you? Innocent? Bah!"

And Claude Harney laughed derisively, and thrusting his hand into his breast pocket, drew out a handful of letters, and then a small skeleton key, and a tiny crystal flask.

Holding up the latter, he said, with a steely gleam in his eyes—

"This will lull the old gentleman to a pleasant sleep, and this"—dangling the key—"will open the cabinet desk. The opportunity is yours—make use of it."

And, with a hasty movement, he returned the letters to his pocket—or all but one, which dropped unnoticed on the grass.

"Take them," he continued, striding over to his helpless victim, and placing them within her nerveless palm.

As he did so a fierce eye gleamed through [illegible] long, thin hand [illegible] and a moment [illegible]

"[illegible]" said Harney, as [illegible] "it is [illegible] me and this grand old estate. My uncle" he added with a cold laugh, "is constitutionally opposed to making a will, else there might be more in my way. With that package in my hand I am I be master, and Elliee Mallory and his worm of a brother can go to the dogs."

For the first time the girl's eyes flashed angrily.

"Shame!" she cried. "Clarence a worm! Clarence, who makes pigmies of us all with his fine nature an [illegible] wealth of intellect. Shame, shame!"

"And," sneered Harney, "with his Adonis form! But," he continued, "I have no time to waste on a miserable hunchback. I must be gone. Remember, be here at the appointed time, or I will, on the very stroke of five, tear the mask from your wretched life. And, now, adieu for the present."

The angry spark had died out of the girl's eyes, and as he disappeared she covered her face with her hands, in the very abandonment of tearless woe.

A soft movement aroused her.

Dropping her hands, she saw before her a small, misshapen creature, his eyes flaming with fierce excitement.

A terrified cry parted her lips.

"Clarence!" she gasped, despairingly. "Oh, Heaven! you have heard all. Clarence, I am innocent. I never liked her; she was not good enough for Elliee, but never—never would I have wronged her by a look even."

"Hush, hush, Blanche!" he murmured, in a voice of thrilling sweetness and tenderness. "I know, poor child. I was here. I am not often far away from you."

"You!" she cried, in eager tones. "Then you know, Clarence?"

"Dear Blanche, rest satisfied. You are [illegible]"

[illegible] the [illegible] and key from the [illegible]

"You did not [illegible]"

"Never!" she exclaimed, with a [illegible]

He nodded his head contentedly saying:

"Now, permit me to guide you. [illegible] be happy, for all will be well. Second, be in the drawing-room as usual this afternoon, and long before five o'clock. I will see that my grandfather and Elliee are there also. Let Claude come: I will meet him. And now return to the house. Claude may be loitering around, and it is better he should not see us together."

The morning glowed into mid-day, and mid-day drooped into the sweet, cool afternoon.

Blanche was in the drawing-room, her fair, golden head reclining against the delicate blue satin of the fauteuil in which she sat, and her eyes fixed nervously upon the little timepiece.

The hands moved slowly on and on.

Five o'clock!

Five minutes passed—ten—twenty—thirty.

"He will not dare," her eyes smiled as she turned to Clarence.

But almost at that very instant a heel rang on the marble floor of the hall, and the next moment Claude entered, handsome, courtly, and relentless as ever, Blanche saw at a glance.

Blanche met his threatening eye unanswerringly, though a crimson spot burned redly on either cheek.

He wasted no time.

Briefly declining to be seated, he said, with a fine semblance of stern dignity—

"I am here as an accuser, uncle, and ——"

"Pardon me, sir," broke in Clarence, his thrilling voice ringing marvellously sweet and clear from his poor, misshapen form. "Before you proceed further, let me state a simple fact. "I was on the other side of the thicket this morning."

"What is that to me?"

"This, sir," answered Clarence, sternly, as he exhibited the flask and key.

"And this," thundered Mr. Orrington, rising to his feet, and opening a letter which he had just taken from his pocket; "this precious epistle, indited by you to some villainous friend, states that the enclosed—[illegible] for [illegible] you, sir! is to be presented [illegible] you [illegible] to secure certain [illegible] papers. Sir, my heart is have been [illegible] wronged, sir! beware!"

"A [illegible] sir, [illegible] the door. [illegible] and never cross [illegible] again. Nay," he thundered, as Harney [illegible] attempted response, "don't tempt me to kick you out. Leave my [illegible] sir," he added, with a threatening stride, as Harney [illegible] opened his mouth. "Leave! not a word, out, out, out!"

And he followed step by step, the glowering [illegible] till the house was clear of his [illegible] presence.

And in [illegible] of the one star of his life, the poor hunchback found a [illegible]

HABITS OF ANTS.—A few weeks since, "a country gentleman" writes, we moved into a new house, and found ants not only thick on the lawn, but upstairs, down-stairs, in my lady's chamber, everywhere but in the oven. My experience convinces me that any attempt to destroy their nests in the daytime [illegible] worse than useless for of all [illegible] of liver me [illegible] west of Lewisville, [illegible] ants! Nothing can be done with them so they are settled in a new hill. One morning I observed an animated black ribbon, half an inch wide, extended along the gravel walk. It proved to be a colony of [illegible] moving their quarters. Every ant carried a larva—a milk white ant, as large as [illegible] going in one direction, while [illegible] returning [illegible] I did not allow them to be disturbed till their work was done, at nine o'clock, then both nests were [illegible] I have always found them active till that time. Different species may have different habits.

FOUR OF A KIND.—Not long since a man with a red head entered a car at the Union depot, St. Joseph, Mo.; a moment later another man with a tiery top came in and took his seat beside number one. They looked at each other, but said nothing, and [illegible] [illegible] a second or [illegible] passengers, when the [illegible] of the car [illegible] a passenger with a [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

Our Young Folks.

THE LITTLE JAP.

BY JULIA GODDARD.

JAPAN, called by her own people "The Land of the Rising Sun," is, as the name might lead us to imagine, a very beautiful country.

The empire consists of four large, and more than 3,000 small, islands, in the great Pacific Ocean, just across the Straits of Korea, and consequently very near to Korea in China.

The summer sun there is so hot that often, during the day, people cannot walk out at all, and the winter is a little trying, because, although the snow will lie on the ground for days, the sun is warm enough during the day to make the cold nights, following upon them, seem a very great contrast.

But Japanese boys and girls know very well how to make themselves happy at all seasons of the year, and this is no wonder, for as we shall see presently, they have no end of toys and amusements.

One thing that would, no doubt, make them happier than anything else is that they are most loving and obedient children to very fond parents, who never punish them.

Never being punished would not, however, make them happy if it were not that, strange to say, they really do not seem to require or deserve punishment—a word softly spoken to Japanese boys and girls being alike enough for admonition and reproof.

The people of Japan are an inquiring race, very anxious and eager to gain knowledge; and to see the little black eyes of the brown-faced babies roaming here and there in seeming inquisitive search, at two or three weeks old, one would fancy that they had early inherited this thirst for knowledge.

I wonder whether they admire their strange-looking mothers when they are first old enough to really notice them, with their brown faces powdered white, their teeth painted black, and their eyebrows shaved.

It used to be the universal custom for Japanese girls to do all this to their faces when they married; but I believe the custom of painting their teeth black is now happily dying out a little.

Mothers carry their babies along in front of them, and when they are tired the fathers are to be seen carrying them in the same way.

They next mount their parents pick-a-back fashion, and not only do fathers and mothers thus give their children repeated rides, but older brothers and sisters do the same for the younger ones, when the bearer is very often but little taller than the one to be seen perched upon his or her back.

The Japanese are a particularly clean race, and think so much of the bath that, although there are bath-rooms in all the large homes, bathing-houses appear in every direction, which are known in the streets by a dark banner hanging over their doorway.

But besides the baths Japanese mothers would tell you that they teach their children to be hardy by dressing them in cold covers, and even plunging them into snow.

Education is a matter of great importance in Japan, and both boys and girls of all ranks and classes are expected not only to learn to read and write, but to have some knowledge of the written history of their own country, which they say extends over 2,500 years.

Children of "The Land of the Rising Sun" have their heads shaved, with the exception of four little tufts, one before, one behind, and one on either side.

They wear bright and many-colored clothes, their loose jackets having very long sleeves almost to the ground, in each of which is a pocket.

They look odd like mites, sometimes going about in clogs, with their little shorn bare heads.

Some wear stockings, but all do not.

Those worn are made like a baby's glove, with one division for the great toe, round which the sandals of the wooden clogs are fastened.

Uncomfortable to walk as we should consider them to be, the children even like to have these clogs too large for them, because they are then so much easier to throw off, and they have always to be removed before the children go into a room.

Sometimes they take them off to use as balls.

Besides the pockets in the long sleeves many boys wear a pouch, in which they carry a purse and materials for writing.

Their money, which has a hole in it, is often strung together in the purse for fear it should be lost.

A man always wears, hanging to a string round his waist, a small portable inkstand, a brush wherewith to write, and a good deal of paper.

About the religion peculiar to Japan little folks would not understand very much.

It is called Shinto, and boys and girls are taught to pray to the sun, the moon, and stars, also to rivers, trees, &c.; and amongst gods and goddesses the sun-goddess, who is supposed to have been won from a cave, is their pattern divinity.

Japanese children are taught to strictly keep festivals in honor of their gods, and on a festival morning boys will go off very early to the harbor to be shaved (the time in Japan for getting up is sunrise, and the time for going to bed sunset;) then they will put on their best clothes, paint and powder their faces, and start away for a Shinto temple.

Outside they may find some bronze dogs.

If they do they will first touch one of these all over, and then themselves in the same way, which signifies a prayer to be well and strong.

When they go into the temple they ring a bell to call the god's attention to what they have to say, drop some money into a box, which they have carried with them, and ask the god to bless them.

Coming along they have most likely bought two rice-cakes, which they give to a boy belonging to the temple, in exchange for which he gives them one that has been blessed.

The dog is quite venerated in Japan, and nobody is allowed to kill one.

On their way to school children meet a great many dogs.

Those who have owners they will know by their wearing a wooden label; the others look in very good condition, and as though they knew how to take care of themselves.

Should there be time a child will stop to give one of these dogs a combing, but some of them look too formidable to be meddled with.

The stray ones all go off to some stable or yard at night, and like we have policemen to protect us the dogs of Japan have guardians to take care of them, and there are hospitals for those that are ill.

So much is done in Japan to make children happy that it would be impossible to describe it all.

Wherever they walk they find stalls in the streets, on which toys or cakes and sweets are sold, but perhaps what would interest American girls more than anything else would be to hear about a feast kept, on the 3rd of March, called "The Feast of Dolls."

The name would lead us to believe that it is the grandest and happiest day in the whole year for girls, and so it is.

Their dolls are, on this day, all displayed, and many a new one has been bought from shops, fitted up with them, for the occasion.

The dolls are most made of wood, or enamelled clay, and are very beautifully dressed; and as girls play with their dolls until they are grown up, and then save them for their children, they accumulate until a great many are in the possession of one family.

No doubt many fans are hung upon the dolls, for we know that Japan, like China, is noted for its fans and pretty little nicknacks.

There is on the 5th of May also a special festival for boys called "The Feast of Flags."

The toys then consist of effigies of great commanders and heroes, and all kinds of implements that are used in war, especially many flags.

In the same way that dolls were bought, two months before, for the girls, these toys are now bought for their brothers.

Japanese children are very good mimics, and very fond of acting.

The boys also like athletic sports, especially wrestling, play football, fly kites, beautiful ones made of tough paper, and representing a variety of things, even children.

Then they walk very much on stilts.

Girls are very fond of battledore and shuttlecock, the shuttlecock being sometimes in the shape and form of a bird, and the battledore consisting of a flat piece of wood with any vellum.

And blowing bubbles is a very favorite amusement of Japanese children.

Then boys and girls like round games, also quiet ones round the table of a winter's evening.

One thing I have forgotten to mention with regard to a stall in the streets which delight little purchasers very much indeed.

A man sells all the materials necessary to make a cake, and then allows his little customers to manufacture it themselves, and to cook it on his stove.

So you see that both within and without of doors people do all that they can to make these children happy, and how glad they must be in return to know that they are doing all in their power to give pleasure, by trying to be very loving, truthful, and obedient!

Besides loving and honoring their parents Japanese children are also taught to honor all their ancestors.

A Swell-bred fop took a seat in a horse-car with the stump of a good cigar between his jeweled fingers, giving out its dying fumes. A bright little girl, made sick by the offensive odor, said to her mother—"Oh, ma, if he'd only throw that away, I'd pick him a longer stump as soon as we get to the park." The ill-bred young man discovered that he had reached his getting off place, and left the car.

DETROIT, MICH., Sept. 24, 1878.

GENTS: I was taken sick one hot... [illegible] I was a fool, and... [illegible] I got it. To-day I am as well as ever, and I did it at 30. I know a great many that need such a medicine.

D. BOYCE.

THE SPOILT DRESS.

BY HENRY FRITH.

"SUCH a pity you cannot go, dear. Everyone will be there," said Melvina Bramleigh.

"And Mr. Evelyn is coming to attend. Don't you think you could furbish up some old dress or other, to make a decent appearance?"

Lilian Hall colored, and set her lips close together to repress the angry retort that was rising to her tongue.

She knew well that Miss Bramleigh's affected condolence and ostentatious advice only concealed a secret exultation in the fact that she, Lilian, would be entirely unable to attend the Floral Ball, which was the one fashionable event of the year.

And in her secret heart she resolved that she would go, if it were in a gingham.

"Melvina shall not have it all to herself," she inwardly declared.

And as soon as Miss Bramleigh had gone, with Squire Bramleigh's coachman sitting in front of her, gilt-buttoned and black velvet banded, Lilian Hall wrapped an old plaid shawl about her, and rushed up into the garret.

"Perhaps I may find something 'decent' up among mamma's old dresses, in the cedar chest," she thought.

And drawing aside the checked curtain of the end window, she opened the lid of the old brass-clamped box, whence floated an aromatic odor of red cedar, the material of which the chest had been made years ago.

An old Indian muslin, yellow in spots, and cut in the folds in which it had lain so long, was first.

Lilian shook her head sadly over it.

"Mamma wore this to her first ball," she said, half aloud.

"I've heart her tell its history many a time—the ball where she met Captain Kirby, whom she afterwards jilted for papa in a fit of pique. I wonder if she repented it.

"Poor woman.

"She never was fit for a farmer's wife, and yet papa loved her dearly. But the muslin is past repair.

"Let me see—here's an old pink silk, made up with bias flounces, and a low tucker of lace; but the color is all out of the front breadths, and it's too scant for anyone to wear now-a-days.

"But this white brocade—that is what I was thinking of when I came up. To be sure it's old-fashioned."

She lifted out the ancient robe carefully pinned in a towel, and shook its lustrous folds, faintly scented with ottar of roses, out to the level light of the March afternoon.

"But it is as beautiful as silver lilies on a field of snow; and it is more ample than the others, with a beautiful long train.

"The waist is hopelessly antiquated; but I can buy a few yards of tulle and make a puffed bodice over plain white muslin, and a little skilful trimming can easily conceal this one spot on the left side, which looks as if some one had spilled a glass of wine there.

"I believe I can make a stylish dress out of it.

"And how Melvina Bramleigh will stare to see me there, in spite of everything."

So Lilian brought the white brocade dress down into the sitting-room, where the tall clock ticked off the minutes after a slow, sepulchral fashion of its own, and a wall of velvet-green geranium leaves made an emerald quiver of light and sunshine in the window, and set herself diligently to work.

And success, to all outward appearance, crowned her labors.

The glistening folds arranged themselves almost spontaneously into exquisite lines and festoons.

The tulle hid all unseemly spots, just as delicate snow-wreaths will oftentimes conceal the rough unsightliness of Mother Earth—and the pink geranium, upon which Lilian depended for a trimming of natural flowers, was hourly opening its rose-tipped buds to a brighter glow of perfection.

"How do you like me, papa?" she saucily demanded, when all was complete and she courtesied her way into the sitting-room, the evening before the ball.

Old Simon Hall opened his eyes wide.

"You're like a fairy queen, child," said he, "or like one of the tall white lilies that bloom in the garden in July. You make me think of your poor, dear mother, although you never will be as beautiful as she was."

Lilian was well pleased with the spirit of her father's criticism, and ran back, smiling and coloring, to resume the plain calico of every-day wear.

A edging of white Spanish blonde, taken from the tucker of the impracticable silk dress, and skilfully rejuvenated by being tacked on a bottle and cleaned in ammonia and Castile soapsuds, was yet to be quilted into the neck and sleeves of the silver brocade—and Lilian brought the dress back and laid it carefully on the table, looking lovingly the while, at the lustrous glimmer of the rich fabric, and the delicate effect of the raised leaves brocaded all over it.

As she went back to her own room for the blonde, Simon Hall came in with the weekly paper in one hand, and a lighted oil light in the other.

The old man's sight was not as good as it once was, and without pausing to glance around, he set the light directly on the white brocade dress.

Of course the uneven surface offered it no sufficient resting-place, and it tipped over, fortunately becoming extinguished as it fell.

Lilian, hurrying back, was just in time to witness the catastrophe, with no power to avert it.

"Oh, papa!" she cried, wildly clasping her little hands. "My dress! my dress!"

"Well, there," said Mr. Hall, picking up the lamp, and just beginning to realize, by the light of Lilian's candle, the amount of mischief done, "it's spoiled that pretty party-frock of yours, I'm sorry."

Lilian caught up the dress.

Alas! a greasy, percolating smear of rank-smelling oil was slowly making its way down the entire front breadth, and scattered drops were showered in various directions over the shining silk.

The tears sprang to her eyes, the hot scarlet suffused her face—but at the same instant she saw her good father's troubled brow.

"Never mind, papa," said she, flinging her arms around his neck, and kissing him. "It don't matter a bit; I—I don't care much about the ball, anyway."

And she ran from the room, to cry at her leisure upstairs.

No one but a young girl, whose heart is set upon one particular evening, can divine the depth of poor Lilian Hall's disappointment.

* * * * * *

Miss Bramleigh was all ready for the Floral Ball a good half hour before time, in her new lilac silk, with the wreath of French asters in shaded purple, the lilac boots, the lavender gloves, and the monster white satin fan, painted in violets and forget-me-nots, such as never bloomed on any mortal bank.

Very charming she looked, in her own estimation at least.

"For, of course, Mr. Evelyn will come to go with us," said she, "and a gentleman never likes to be kept waiting."

Squire Bramleigh uttered an involuntary groan, as he thought how often Melvina had kept him dancing on the door-steps, while she fitted on her new kid gloves for church, or tied and re-tied her bonnet-strings for a drive.

The slow moments flitted by, and still no cavalier arrived.

"Come, come," said the squire, as the clock struck ten, "'t is no good footing here any longer. If we're going at all, we must go now."

And reluctantly enough, Miss Melvina was forced to agree.

That same evening, while Lilian Hall was darning stockings by the little round table, she was surprised by a tap at the door, and the appearance of Mr. Algernon Evelyn in full dress.

"Mr. Evelyn!" she cried, starting up in amazement.

"Pardon my intrusion," said he, "but I hoped that if I came early, you would allow me to take you to the ball in my carriage. But you are not yet dressed!"

"I am not going."

"Not going?" echoed he.

"I'll tell you why, Mr. Evelyn," interrupted Mr. Hall. "It's because her clumsy old father contrived to tip a lamp all over her dress, and she makes believe, like the good daughter she is, that she don't care but about going, sooner than to hurt my feelings; but she can't deceive me."

Mr. Evelyn sat down resolutely by the table and began to pull off his white kid gloves.

"Miss Lilian," said he, "if you're not going to the Floral Ball, neither am I."

"Mr. Evelyn!"

"All I cared about it was for a chance to waltz with you," said he. "May I stay and spend the evening with you?"

"If—if you choose. But Melvina Bramleigh is to be there," faltered Lilian.

"Melvina Bramleigh is no more to me than yonder cat on the hearth-rug," said Algernon Evelyn, obdurately.

* * * * *

Old Squire Bramleigh handsome daughter called the next day.

Lilian Hall received her with her wonted composure.

"Well, Melvina, how did you enjoy the ball?" she asked.

"Oh, not at all. It was horribly stupid. The dresses dowdy—the supper a failure—the band full of discords, and Mr. Evelyn was not there, after all."

"No," said Lilian, a little mischievously. "I know he wasn't. He spent the evening here."

"Spent the evening here! Mr. Evelyn!"

"Yes, and we're engaged to be married! I tell you thus early, Melvina, because I shall ask you to be my bridesmaid."

"Lilian Hall, you are joking."

"No, I'm not. Look at my engagement ring."

And Lilian held up her pretty forefinger with the sparkle of a superb diamond encircling it.

For once in her life, Melvina Bramleigh was completely taken aback, and I am afraid Lilian rather enjoyed it.

"After all," chuckled old Simon Hall "it was a good thing that your ball-dress got a la up tipped over it, Lilian, for a good husband is better than an evening of waltzing."

A Statistician (bachelor of course,) insists that courtship average three tons of coal each, and we would add, scores of bad coughs and colds, but then every prudent parent is provided with a bottle of Dr. Bull's Cough Syrup. Price, 25 cents.

YESTERDAY COMES NOT.

BY S. E.

I had a diamond ring,
Radiant with love's bright promise long ago;
But ah! it could not bring
Fulfilment—love and life alike lay low!

I gave it to a friend—
Its sparkle seemed so mocking 'mid my tears—
A tried and faithful friend,
And lived a dim gray life through lonesome years.

Then lately hope began
To throb within me feebly once again;
Each morrow had its plan,
And memory was not altogether pain.

And with this new-found life
Came a great longing for the radiant ring;
My fancies ayre were rife
With what of olden joy it yet might bring.

My friend the wish had guessed,
And sent it back, right generous to me.
How shall I tell the rest?
Look at my hands; their story you may see!

With widow's toil rough grown,
The ring could clasp my finger now no more;
Ah, youth and joy have flown!
And earth can never hope once lost restore!

The past comes never back!
Thank Heaven for the old glamor—though 'tis o'er—
Something the days to come must lack;
The ring will fit the finger nevermore!

OF INVITATIONS.

INVITING General Churchill to visit him in his retirement at Houghton Hall, Walpole wrote:

"This place affords no news, no subject of amusement and entertainment to you fine gentlemen. Persons of wit and pleasure in town understand not the language, nor taste the charms of the inanimate world. The oaks, the beeches, and chestnuts, seem to contend which should best please the lord of the manor. If these, dear Charles, are any temptations, I heartily invite you to come and partake of them. Shifting the scene has sometimes its recommendations; and from country fare you may possibly return with a better appetite to the more delicate entertainment of a court life."

The "most honest of corruptionists" effectually guarded against his desired guest suffering from unrealized expectation. Dr. Sheridan seems to have gone the other way about it, when, asking Swift to dine at his house, he promised him, in the Latin-Anglicus they both affected:

"Ago use, a paro dux. Sum fis hes, as a paro so les, a paro places. A pud in. A fri casei. Arabit astu in. Neu peas. Neu beans. Alam pi fit for minis ter o state. liquor is toc qua, it costus api stola quart. A quartos ac. Morgo use claret as fine as a rubi. Graves. Hoc. Sum Cyprus. As fine Sidere se ver Id runcat everne."

Anxious to repay a clever young clergyman for a flattering dedication, Archbishop Herring told him to drop in at Lambeth Palace whenever he was so inclined, incautiously adding, that the oftener he saw him the more he would be obliged to him. Taking lodgings in the neighborhood, shrewd Mr. Faukes, contrived to "drop in" at the palace every day at dinner time, until the archbishop was driven to something more than hinting that he had had enough of his company; but his unwelcome guest would not understand, and to rid himself of the infliction, he gave him a couple of good livings, and Mr. Faukes found himself well rewarded for ignoring the common saying, that a general invitation is no invitation at all.

Swift was at no pains to be polite when declining an invitation from his friend Sheridan to bring his lady friends to taste his wine, writing:

"Mrs. Dingley and Mrs. Johnson say truly they don't care for your wife's company, though they like your wine; they had rather have it at their own house to drink in quiet. However they consider it decidedly civil in Mr. Sheridan to make the offer."

Byron sent Lady Dover word "he would not come" to her soiree; and might as well have kept his word, for any pleasure he or the lady derived from his changing his mind, since he recorded on the fly-leaf of his Virgil:

"Went, after all, for half an hour—home again—hate society. Man has been designated a selfish animal. Now, what in the name of comfort should bring any sensible man here? Unless self prompt us to do nothing but what is agreeable, I do not know why it should have an 'ish' tied to its tail. People going to a swarre are not selfish, they sacrifice comfort and virtue, if they possess that article. At Lady D.'s squeeze I was condemned to listen to an old dowager and Lord C——, the queer old noodle!"

When a certain English author was asked to the house of an American lady of advanced opinions "to meet some minds at tea," he declined the proffered hospitality, on the ground that he was engaged to meet some stomachs at dinner.

Probably he thought, like Citoyenne Desire, that ladies of advanced opinion are better kept at a distance. That wife of a French artizan had the courage to take the redoubtable Louise Michel to task for turning her husband's head with her foolish writings, making him fancy himself a statesman, under which delusion he neglected his work, and starved his family, for the good of his country.

An animated correspondence ensued, of which—perhaps because she got the worst of the argument—the famous feminine Communist first grew tired; whereupon she brought it to an end with:

"I cannot waste any more time upon the Citoyenne Desire, who has been annoying me. If she has anything more to say, she had better come to my office, where I have a broom ready for her reception."

The next issue of the Revolutionare Sociale contained the triumphant announcement:

"The Citoyenne Desire has not accepted my invitation."

Many an invitation, like that of Louise Michel, has been given in the expectation of its non-acceptance.

Grains of Gold.

Deliberation on useful things is prudent delay.

He who desires to prove too much, proves nothing.

To aim at the happiness of others, lifts us above ourselves.

Avoid an angry man for a while, a malicious one forever.

As anyone is more wise, he is more sparing of his censure.

No man ever prayed heartily without learning something.

The proof of a strong will is its graceful surrender on proper occasions.

With God, even across the sea; without Him, not even to the threshold.

The man whose soul is in his work, finds his best reward in the work itself.

Sorrow is as often the result of bodily punishment as it is of true repentance.

When we know how to appreciate a merit we have the germ of it within ourselves.

Always keep good company, so that you may get the credit of being good yourself.

There is no evil we cannot either face or fly from, but the consciousness of duty disregarded.

People may be induced to follow a certain line of action without ever understanding it at all.

A firm faith is the best divinity; a good life the best philosophy; a clear conscience the best law.

The real object of education is to give children resources that will endure as long as life endures.

There is no trait more valuable than a determination to persevere when the right thing is to be accomplished.

The great friend of truth is time; her greatest enemy is prejudice, and humility her constant companion.

Silence never, hows itself to so great an advantage as when it is made the reply to calumny and defamation.

For a man to think that he is going to do the work of a lifetime without obstacles, is to dream in the lap of folly.

If we (the dead) wake, we shall know; if we do not wake, we shall not even know that we have not wakened.

The best of us are hampered in every effort at improvement, not alone by our faults, but by those of our neighbors.

The true way to advance another's virtue is to follow it; and the best way to cry down another's vice is to decline it.

Seek through proper and honest effort to gain a good reputation, a possession every man should strive to secure.

Happy is he who appropriates the acquisitions of others, whether their virtues for example, or their follies for avoidance.

Do not philosophize over the contradictions which beset you; do not dwell upon them, but strive to see God in all things.

There is no policy like politeness, and a good manner is the best thing in the world, either to get a good name, or supply the want of it.

Loud talk is often mistaken for argument, and de man what drowns de voices ob udder men is mighty often thought ter hab gained de fight.

The expectation of future happiness is the best relief for anxious thoughts, the most perfect cure of melancholy, the guide of life, and the comfort of death.

Femininities.

Women flag railway crossings in Austria.

Oscar Wilde is about to be married. Now we know why he had his hair cut.

The Supreme Court of Massachusetts has decided that a woman is a "person."

A Massachusetts widow dresses in mourning and wears bangs made of her departed husband's hair.

The wife of Congressman Lowery, of Indiana, wrote his campaign speech, and secured 2,000 votes for him herself.

One good mother, said George Herbert, is worth a hundred schoolmasters. In the home she is "loadstone to all hearts, and loadstar to all eyes."

Mrs. Mary A. Miller, of New Orleans, applied for a license as master of a steamboat. The Supervising Inspector reports her competent, but debars her because of her sex.

In his lecture on "Marriage," Mgr. Capel made the point that both man and woman have deficiencies, and that these can be supplied by the bond which binds them together.

A Mexican swain must tell the parents of his girl whether he can support her before he is allowed to begin courting. This rule is better than courting first, and starving afterwards.

The young ladies of Girton College, in England, are about to act a Greek play in one of their own buildings, no member of the male sex being admitted to witness the interesting performance.

Fond wife to forgetful husband: "Did you bring any letters this evening, dear?" Dear has a sort of a vague idea that he did, and hands out three, all given him at different dates by the fond wife to mail.

She admitted that the young man made a strong impression on her. "Yes," said her mother, "I can see where the impression mashed that lace just about as flat as a clean napkin. Don't let it happen again."

A male telegraph operator at Fort Worth and a female operator at St. John, N. B., who had been "courting" by wire for a year and a half, were married a few days ago in Chicago, where they met by appointment.

When a little child, on being offered a third plate of plum pudding, says, with a wistful look, "No, thank you!" think of your own childish days, think what plum-pudding was then, and send the little one another slice.

Home is the residence not merely of the body, but of the heart; it is a place for the affections to unfold and develop themselves, for children to play in, for husband and wife to toil smilingly together, and make life a blessing.

Mary Churchill ran away from St. Louis because her parents required her to practice at the pianoforte two hours a day, and now that she has returned and begun to play eighteen hours a day, rumor says that her parents are missing.

All sorts of incredible stories are told of the ostrich farm in California. The latest is, that in the morning, during laying time, if the wind is in the right quarter, the cackling of the hen ostrich can be heard at a distance of forty miles.

Charlemagne's secretary was caught by a snow storm while sparking the Emperor's daughter at midnight, and she carried him home on her back so that his footsteps couldn't be tracked. The Emperor heard of it, and saddled him on her for the rest of his life.

During the age of Shakspeare, and the reign of Charles I., lovers exhibited tokens of their passion in public. A lock of hair, plaited and tied with ribbon, and hanging to the ear, was fashionable. Kissing the eyes was a mark of extraordinary tenderness.

A female miser, eighty-three years of age, was found dead, in London, a few days ago. She owned a number of houses, one hundred acres of land and $6,000 in cash. She had written the Lord's Prayer on both of the gate-posts as a charm against thieves and burglars.

Postal officials say that the foreign mails now-a-days are burdened with hundreds of thousands of dollars from this country to Europe as Christmas presents. It is said that two-thirds of the amount comes from servant girls who are proud to remember "the old folks at home."

The Connecticut man who heads the revolt against girl babies, and breaks his wife's limb because there are no boys in his house, is not considered much just now, but some day American history will be proud to acknowledge this pioneer in the reform of United States families.

Anna Sutton, whose life has just appeared in England, was, an exchange says, a master of Greek, Latin, French, Italian, Hebrew, Arabic and Chaldaic, and, when past eighty years of age, she astonished a learned rabbi by conversing with him in Hebrew. She was a native of Ireland.

A Walla Walla, W. T., belle finds it difficult to matrimonially interest any of the aspiring youth of that settlement in her behalf, as her father has publicly announced that he will shoot at sight the first young man he finds in her company. Like the last rose of summer, she is blooming singly.

In a Brooklyn hall, the other night, Luigi Monti, formerly United States Consul at Palermo, Italy, delivered a letter, in which he argued that Lucretia Borgia, instead of being the execrable woman that novelists, dramatists and others have represented her to have been, was, in reality, a noble, Christian woman.

In Italy it is customary for three or four married women to drag a bride to her would-be husband. She pretends to struggle desperately to get away. A wise journalist points out that it would take all the married women in the country to hold back an American girl when she had concluded to enter the conjugal state.

Women and girls "doing" the European resorts are seen with the Mother Hubbard cane, which they hold before them, leaning on it with both hands. These canes are often seen in London parks during the season, carried by elderly and young women, large bows of ribbon being tied near the top of the cane the same color as the dress.

News Notes.

The cockroach has 3,000 teeth.

A bushel of timothy contains 55,000,000 seeds.

Some 30,000 children are living in canal boats in England.

The American grain elevator system is to be introduced in Russia.

At Winona, Miss., the night telegraph operator is only 12 years old.

Denver newspapers have commenced a war on the Chinese in that city.

There is a negro jailed at Alexandria, Va., who has eaten nothing for 60 days.

There are 17,961 more Government pensioners than at this time last year.

An Indiana debating society is discussing the question, "Are Dudes human?"

Paris workingmen are organizing against cheap labor from Prussia and Italy.

Philadelphia has 85 institutions that care for neglected and dependent children.

Two thousand northern sportsmen are said to be hunting in Virginia this season.

A resolution extending the franchise to women has been introduced in the United States Senate.

The Prince of Wales is said to be making very extensive investments in real estate in Kansas.

For kissing a pretty girl against her will William Z. Hamilton, of Duluth, Minn., was fined $10.

Mrs. Randall and Mrs. Dubois, sisters, living near Lowell, Mich., both went crazy the same day.

It has been publicly decided in Utah that men are responsible for slanderous utterances of their wives.

Seven children, all under 11 years of age, recently arrived at Castle Garden from Germany unattended.

In the late elections in Connecticut, 94 of the 167 towns in the Land of Steady Habits voted "No License."

From Jersey City there comes a story of a woman who was "mesmerized" by a thief, who then robbed her store.

A little girl in Versailles, Ky., was so badly burned by some hot soap that she swallowed, that it killed her.

There is a standing reward of $500 for the apprehension of train-wreckers, or their aiders or abettors, in Texas.

Insanity is becoming prevalent among the older families of Boston. Too much over-culture and inter-marriage.

South Carolina has no divorce law. A bill providing for divorce came up in the State Senate recently, and was defeated.

Fifty-one matrimonially mismated people made application to be divorced on one particular day in Chicago, recently.

On an island in Lake Winnepiseogee, a party of Bostonians captured a snake having thirteen rattles. It was over seven feet long.

A woman has just been awarded $3,600 damages by a Cleveland court, because of a cough she acquired in a freshly-plastered hotel.

Two magnificent yearling heifers belonging to John Schollenberger, of Hamberg, this State, were bitten by copperheads while grazing, and both died.

Erie brakemen say the reason snakes are so easily caught now, is that they are blind this month. Great numbers have been killed near Port Jervis.

They had a feather-picking match on a farm near Kansas City, Mo., recently, and one of the contestants stripped a chicken clean in just twenty seconds.

A cat's cries awakened a canal-boat captain and family at New Haven, recently. The boat had sprung a leak and was sinking. Sixteen lives were thus saved.

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Scientists say that the reason kissing is so pleasant, is because the teeth, jaw-bones and lips are full of nerves, and, when the lips meet, an electric current is generated.

Funeral processions are not allowed to pass through the business streets of Grand Rapids, Mich., but must use prescribed thoroughfares on the outskirts of the town.

A London paper denounces the impudence of an enterprising undertaker, who sends doctors a circular offering a handsome commission if they will recommend him.

Dr. Jackson, an English surgeon living in India, was stung to death by hornets recently while hunting tigers. He received over 300 stings, and died from erysipelas that followed.

North Carolina will levy no State tax next year. The Western North Carolina Railroad Company will pay into the Treasury $200,000, which sum will carry the State Government.

Clara Louise Kellogg recently sang "Home, Sweet Home," to the convicts in an Eastern prison, and it so worked upon their feelings that seven of them escaped and struck out for the parental roof-tree the same night.

I SUFFERED FOR SEVERAL YEARS FROM ASTHMA and from some Affection of the Throat resembling Bronchitis. After spending a great deal of money on various medicines, with no material benefit, in March last, on the recommendation of Mr. F. Peters, of this place, I obtained Dr. Jayne's Expectorant. After taking two bottles of the remedy, I found myself so much improved that I continued taking it until I used seven bottles, and by this time my symptoms had all disappeared, and I have every reason to believe myself cured.—W. Radin, Catarina, Austin Co., Texas.

A CHARACTER SKETCH.

The mule seemed pensive, even sad,
As if by conscience pricked;
But, when they came to share his woes,
He raised objections—kicked.

The cat came up to sympathize,
With mew and gentle pŭrr;
Alas! she got within his reach,
When—diddle strings and fur.

The dog, in pity, neared him, too,
To alleviate his care;
He tried to pass around him once,
When—sausage-meat and hair.

And John, the honest farmer boy,
Who had the beast in charge,
Tried recklessly to harness him—
His funeral was large.

Oh, trifling were the causes which
His flexile legs unfurled;
And many were the quadrupeds
That sought another world.

He never did a decent thing,
He wasn't worth a ducat;
He kicked and kicked until he died—
And then he kicked the bucket.

—U. N. Noxs.

Facetiæ.

Invisible blew—The wind.

An open fire-place—The field of battle.

Naturally, clocked stockings are the most striking.

The financial outlook—The paying-teller's window.

About the only troubles that come single are fussy old maids.

"Here's room for improvement," remarked the teacher as he entered a school-house.

The modern martyr who suffers at the steak is the chap who lives at a cheap boarding-house.

A machine for pressing hops has recently been invented. America is the home of the hop-pressed.

Wonderful cures of Heart Disease by using Dr. Graves' Heart Regulator. Sold by druggists at $1.

"I'm at your service, madam," said the polite burglar, when caught with his arms full of silver ware.

Adam is said to be the only man who never tantalized his wife about "the way his mother used to cook."

The small, thin feathers on a goose are called down, but when you go to buy them, you find them way up.

"It's all stuff," as the lady remarked when her husband complained of having to pay for another new dress.

A melancholy case of suicide—A naughty little boy, having been threatened with a whipping, immediately hung his head.

It is very bad taste for a wife to growl at her husband for tracking mud into the house, for "what is home without its mudder?"

"I was only footing one of your Bills," remarked a loud father to his daughter, after kicking her sweet William out of the front gate.

A young man writes to consult us about the best pattern of health-lift. We would suggest that he help his mother occasionally with the coal-scuttle.

Never known to fail. Dr. Graves' Heart Regulator as a cure for Heart Disease. Sold by druggists.

The young man who pays $60 for a suit of clothes, is always ready to borrow the money from another man who pays $30 a suit. There's a moral to this, boys.

Long to be remembered—such names as Aschaffenburg, Sondershausen, Lauderchlagen, and Pietropaulovitz. In fact, they are too long to be remembered.

When is a door not a door? When it is a jar. Oh, no; that answer belongs to the first decade of the last century. Nowadays a door is not a door when it is a negress.

Lord Chesterfield, noticing a very grave and awkward couple dancing a minuet, said they looked as if they were doing it for money, and were doubtful about getting paid.

A plant has been found that cures bashfulness. It should be promptly tried on the man who leaves the hotel by the back window because he is too bashful to say good-by to the cashier.

You should never chew a raw oyster. Just place him lengthwise across the edge of your tongue, elevate your chin a little, and after that you will have nothing to do but pay for him.

Maker of musical instruments, cheerfully rubbing his hands: "There, thank goodness, the bass fiddle is finished at last!" After a pause: "There—if I haven't gone and left my glue-pot inside!"

An exchange gives a lot of advice "How to catch a husband." The simplest way to catch him would be to leave him alone with a good-looking maid-servant, and then suddenly come upon him unawares.

"The dynamite party!" exclaimed Mrs. Shoddy, who was reading over the papers. "Dear me, Augustus, we'll have to give one right away, before those Smiths hear of it. I wonder what it's like?"

Butcher—"For dinner? Yes, ma'am. Nice quarter lamb, ma'am." Mrs. Turtle Dove, bride of a fortnight: "Oh, but there are only two of us! Don't you think an eighth would do a great deal better?"

The idea of congratulating a man because he has reached his 70th birthday, as though that was anything to be joyous about. Now, if the man could only reach his 7th birthday again, there'd be something to fetch the band out for.

5,000 Beatty Organs Shipped.

During the past three months Mayor Beatty, the enterprising organ-builder of Washington, N. J., shipped 5,000 cabinet organs from his factory there, as follows: September, 1,400: October, 1,600: November (two holidays) 1,600—total, 5,000. It is said that this is by far the largest shipment of organs made there by any organ-builder in America for the same length of time, and it is proof that the public are buying Beatty's organs in preference to other makes.

He agrees to ship the organ that is advertised in this issue of the POST the same day he receives the order, or forfeit $500 in greenbacks. This is enterprise, and to those who want an organ for a holiday present it is a decided bargain.

THE compliments of the season—colds, coughs, catarrh—may be effectively dealt with by taking Ayer's Cherry Pectoral. To neglect prompt treatment for these ailments is to risk consumption, which is said to cause one-sixth of the mortality of all civilized countries.

Consumption Cured.

An old physician, retired from practice, having had placed in his hands by an East India missionary the formula of a simple vegetable remedy for the speedy and permanent cure for Consumption, Bronchitis, Catarrh, Asthma, and all Throat and Lung Affections, also a positive and radical cure for Nervous Debility and all Nervous Complaints, after having tested its wonderful curative powers in thousands of cases, has felt it his duty to make it known to his suffering fellows. Actuated by this motive and a desire to relieve human suffering, I will send free of charge to all who desire it, this recipe, in German, French or English, with full directions for preparing and using. Sent by mail by addressing with stamp, naming this paper, W. A. NOYES, *149 Power's Block, Rochester, N. Y.*

Superfluous Hair.

Madame Wambold's Specific permanently removes Superfluous Hair without injuring the skin. Send for circular. Madame WAMBOLD, 198 West Springfield Street, Boston, Mass.

What it Did for an Old Lady.

COSHOCTON STATION, N. Y., Dec. 28, 1878.

GENTS—A number of people had been using your Bitters here, and with marked effect. In one case, a lady of over seventy years, had been sick for years, and for the past ten years has not been able to be around half the time. About six months ago she got so feeble she was helpless. Her old remedies, or physicians, being of no avail, I sent to Deposit, forty-five miles away, and got a bottle of Hop Bitters. It improved her so she was able to dress herself and walk about the house. When she had taken the second bottle she was able to take care of her own room and walk out to her neighbor's, and has improved all the time since. My wife and child have also derived great benefit from their use.

W. B. HATHAWAY.
Agt. U. S. Ex. Co.

☞ When our readers answer any Advertisement found in these columns they will confer a favor on the Publisher and the advertiser by naming the Saturday Evening Post.

An Old Soldier's EXPERIENCE.

"Calvert, Texas,
May 3, 1882.

"I wish to express my appreciation of the valuable qualities of

Ayer's Cherry Pectoral

as a cough remedy.

"While with Churchill's army, just before the battle of Vicksburg, I contracted a severe cold, which terminated in a dangerous cough. I found no relief till on our march we came to a country store, where, on asking for some remedy, I was urged to try AYER'S CHERRY PECTORAL.

"I did so, and was rapidly cured. Since then I have kept the PECTORAL constantly by me, for family use, and I have found it to be an invaluable remedy for throat and lung diseases. J. W. WHELESS."

Thousands of testimonials certify to the prompt cure of all bronchial and lung affections, by the use of AYER'S CHERRY PECTORAL. Being very palatable, the youngest children take it readily.

PREPARED BY

Dr. J. C. Ayer & Co., Lowell, Mass.

Sold by all Druggists.

THE MILD POWER
CURES

HUMPHREYS HOMEOPATHIC SPECIFICS

In use twenty years. The most safe, simple, economical and efficient medicine known. Dr. Humphreys' Book on Disease and its Cure (144 pp.) also Illustrated Catalogue sent free. Humphreys Homeopathic Medicine Co., 109 Fulton St., New York

ALWAYS ASK FOR

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For sale by all Stationers.
26 John Street, New York.

$1000 Positively sure to Agents everywhere selling our New SILVER SOLID WHITE WIRE CLOTHES-LINE. Warranted. Pleases at sight. Cheap. Sells readily at every house. Agents clearing $50 per day. Farmers make $900 to $1200 during Winter. Handsome samples free. Every 100 Days
Address, GIRARD WIRE MILLS, Philadelphia, Pa.

OPIUM MORPHINE HABIT. No pay till cured. Ten years established. 1,000 cured. State case. Dr. Marsh, Quincy, Mich.

DR. RADWAY'S SARSAPARILLIAN RESOLVENT.

The Great Blood Purifier.

FOR THE CURE OF CHRONIC DISEASE.

SCROFULOUS OR SYPHILITIC, HEREDITARY OR CONTAGIOUS.

Chronic Rheumatism, Scrofula, Glandular Swelling, Hacking Dry Cough, Cancerous Affections, Syphilitic Complaints, Bleeding of the Lungs, Dyspepsia, Water Brash, White Swelling, Tumors, Hip Diseases, Mercurial Diseases, Female Complaints, Gout Dropsy, Bronchitis, Consumption.

For the cure of

SKIN DISEASES,

ERUPTIONS ON THE FACE AND BODY, PIMPLES, BLOTCHES, SALT RHEUM, OLD SORES, ULCERS, **Dr. Radway's Sarsaparillian Resolvent** excels all remedial agents. It purifies the blood, restoring health and vigor; clear skin and beautiful complexion secured to all.

Liver Complaints, Etc.,

Not only does the Sarsaparillian Resolvent excel all remedial agents in the cure of Chronic Scrofulous, Constitutional and Skin Diseases, but it is the only positive cure for

Kidney and Bladder Complaints

Urinary and Womb Diseases, Gravel, Diabetes, Dropsy, Stoppage of Water, Incontinence of Urine, Bright's Disease, Albuminuria, and in all cases where there are brick-dust deposits, or the water is thick, cloudy or mixed with substances like the white of an egg, or threads like white silk, or there is a morbid, dark, bilious appearance and white bone-dust deposits, and where there is a pricking, burning sensation when passing water, and pain in the small of the back and along the loins.

SOLD BY DRUGGISTS.

One bottle contains more of the active principles of medicine than any other preparation. Taken in Teaspoonful Doses, while others require five or six times as much. **One Dollar Per Bottle.**

R. R. R.

RADWAY'S READY RELIEF.

The Cheapest and Best Medicine for Family Use in the World.

COUGHS, COLDS, INFLAMMATIONS, FEVER AND AGUE CURED AND PREVENTED.

DR. RADWAY'S READY RELIEF.

RHEUMATISM, NEURALGIA, DIPHTHERIA, INFLUENZA, SORE THROAT, DIFFICULT BREATHING,

RELIEVED IN A FEW MINUTES

By Radways' Ready Relief.

MALARIA

IN ITS VARIOUS FORMS,

FEVER AND AGUE.

There is not a remedial agent in the world that will cure Fever and Ague, and all other Malarious, Bilious, Scarlet, Typhoid, Yellow and other fevers, (aided by RADWAY'S PILLS) so quick as RADWAY'S READY RELIEF.

Looseness, Diarrhœa, or painful discharges from the bowels are stopped in fifteen or twenty minutes by taking Radway's Ready Relief. No congestion or inflammation, no weakness or lassitude, will follow the use of the R. R. Relief.

ACHES AND PAINS.

For headache, whether sick or nervous, toothache, neuralgia, nervousness and sleeplessness, rheumatism, lumbago, pains and weakness in the back, spine, or kidneys; pains around the liver, pleurisy, swelling of the joints, pains in the bowels, heartburn and pains of all kinds, Radway's Ready Relief will afford immediate ease, and its continued use for a few days effect a permanent cure. Price, 50 cents.

RADWAY'S REGULATING PILLS.

Perfect Purgative, Soothing Aperient, Act Without Pain, Always Reliable, and Natural in Their Operations.

A VEGETABLE SUBSTITUTE FOR CALOMEL.

Perfectly Tasteless, elegantly coated with sweet gum, purge, regulate, purify, cleanse, and strengthen. RADWAY'S PILLS for the cure of all disorders of the Stomach, Liver, Bowels, Kidneys, Bladder, Nervous Diseases, Headache, Constipation, Costiveness, Indigestion, Dyspepsia, Biliousness, Fever, Inflammation of the Bowels, Piles, and all derangements of the Internal Viscera. Purely vegetable, containing no mercury, minerals or deleterious drugs.

☞ Observe the following symptoms resulting from Diseases of the Digestive Organs: Constipation, Inward Piles, Fulness of the Blood in the Head, Acidity of the Stomach, Nausea, Heartburn, Disgust of Food, Fulness or Weight in the Stomach, Sour Eructations, Sinking or Fluttering at the Heart, Choking or Suffocating Sensations when in a lying posture, Dimness of Vision, Dots or Webs before the Sight, Fever and Dull Pain in the Head, Deficiency of Perspiration, Yellowness of the Skin and Eyes, Pain in the Side, Chest, Limbs, and Sudden Flushes of Heat, Burning in the Flesh.

A few doses of RADWAY'S PILLS will free the system of all the above-named disorders.

Price, 25 Cents Per Box.

SOLD BY DRUGGISTS.

READ "FALSE AND TRUE."

Send a letter stamp to **RADWAY & CO., No. 32 Warren Street, New York.**

☞ Information worth thousands will be sent to you.

TO THE PUBLIC.

Be sure and ask for Radway's, and see that the name "Radway" is on what you buy.

New York 'Singer' Model Sewing Machine only $15

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All on account of Eliza.
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The Man with the Sealskin Pants.
The Old Folks are gone.
Is Jennie True To Me?
Put Away That Straw.
With the Angels By and Bye.
Oh, Lucinda.
Scenes of Childhood.
Grandmother's Chair.
Oh, Mary Ann, I'll Tell Your Ma!
My Heart's with my Norah.
Lardy Dah!
The Colored Hop.
Don't Shut out the Sunlight Mother.
The Sweet Flowers I've Brought to You.
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Angel Faces o'er the River.
Yes, I'll Love You When You're Old
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Hardly Ever.

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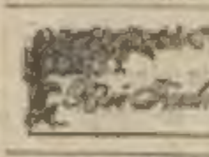

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ABOUT WIDOWS.

A WOMAN often marries the first time to please somebody else. Her parents, perhaps, or some unaccountable whim which she can't explain. A widow marries to please herself. She knows the little subterfuges of coquetry—the tiny nothings comprised in the glance of an eye or squeeze of the hand; the die-away look of longing, or the pert piquancy of affectionate interest that draws the crusty old bachelor out of his shell and carries in her wake the young one who lavishes upon her bouquets and smiles.

There are various kinds of widows. There is the blue-eyed, mush-and-milk, soft as pussy's foot, and always performing the die-away when anybody is by to catch her before she faints.

She continually talks of the late lamented until you know of him as a monument of unheard of virtues.

For a time a widow mourns sincerely. She leads a life of cloistered retirement, wearing an impenetrable veil which no peeping eye of curiosity can look through. She can't eat, the wine has lost its flavor. She reads over and over again his letters and blots them with silent tears.

His picture is under her pillow, her room is decorated with mementos of him. She wears the plainest of mourning. If she has a child she'll spoil it, and its every motion and look will remind her of the only man who ever lived.

She cultivates the clergy and attends to her masses and vespers, her prayers and confessions, with a devotion that is appalling.

Men of the world shake their heads and wisely whisper—

"She'll come out of that."

And sure enough she does. The French proverb says, "It's hard to grow old gracefully."

It is hard for a young woman to come out of her weeds naturally. She fancies everyone is looking at her. She wonders what they will say. But she is lively and young, and youth is full of elasticity and hope.

If she could travel, it would do her good. Change of scene, say the wise medical men. Her dress begins to assume a change. Jet ornaments appear, which are well set off by her shapely arms and white neck. Pieces of trimming appear on her dresses, and bombazine is discarded for cashmere. She consoles herself with, "It's black; the texture is the only difference." She talks the matter of dress over with other husbandless females.

They lay aside folds to put on ruches, and wonder when the box-plaitings come in. Some cynical man who had observed closely this transition or chrysalis state of widowhood reduced it to a science, and he claims there are five stages of widowhood:

1. The dress of black bombazine, perfectly plain; a thick crape veil, a widow's cap; no jewelry, except a jet locket; collar, etc., of crape.

2. The veil thrown back over the bonnet; a little trimming on dresses; white collars.

3. The cap disappears; a lace veil is worn instead of crape; more trimming.

4. "Dressy" mourning of silk, with feathers in bonnet.

5. Half-mourning — purple and pearl color. Now comes the stage where she's deemed dangerous. She has entered the lists, and her winning ways and experience all make her one to be sought and confided in.

Young lovers tell her of their flirtations, and she doles out advice with the wisdom of a Chancery Judge.

Men make fools of girls, but women make fools of men. The widow spreads her web of flattery and flirtation, and as the poor insect ventures in she rolls him round and round in her meshes, as a spider does a blue-bottle fly.

THE bill of fare at a Socorro (N. M.) banquet, which the local paper describes as "sumptuous," was as follows: Baked beans, hot slaw, pickled tripe, potato salad, pickled heart, pickles, rye bread, wheat bread, cheese.

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12 FULL SETS GOLDEN TONGUE REEDS, $200 FOR ONLY $88.00. 29-Stops. Warranted 6 Years.

"BEATTY'S BEST" BEETHOVEN PARLOR ORGANS, latest style, No. 29,006. Height, 7 feet 3 inches; length, 4 feet 6 inches; depth, 2 feet 6 inches; Upright Pianoforte Style Case.

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4th Set—Symphonic VIOLINA Reeds.
5th Set—Powerful SUB-BASS Reeds.
6th Set—Sweet VOIX CELESTE Reeds.
7th Set—Rich and Mellow CELLO Reeds.
8th Set—Pleasing DULCIANA Reeds.
9th Set—Noble DIAPASON Reeds.
10th Set—Brilliant CLARIONET Reeds.
11th Set—ANGELIC HARP Reeds.
12th Set—Weird NIGHT HORN Reeds.

READ THE DESCRIPTION OF STOP WORK. 29 IN ALL.

1—CLARIONET.—A set of reeds that exactly imitates the musical instrument that bears its name. It is one of the most brilliant sets of reeds used in "BEATTY'S BEST."

2—VOIX CELESTE.—The sweet, pure, and exalted tones produced from this Stop are beyond description.

3—CELLO.—A rich and melodious tone is produced.

4—FRENCH HORN.—Imitates a full ORCHESTRA and BRASS BAND.

5—PICCOLO.—Variety of music which makes the Piccolo the most difficult and expensive Stop to build. Produ ing an effect similar to a MILITARY BAND.

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If you ever intend to buy an Organ you should order this instead of some other make. Why? Because this instrument contains all the music to be found in an ordinary Organ that is sold at retail for $200.00. Besides, it has many varieties of sweet combinations and imitations of several musical and pipe instruments only to be obtained in "BEATTY'S BEST." Now ready for 1884. It is fully secured by United States patents. Why, then, not order the best? If you are not entirely satisfied after one year's use you are at perfect liberty to return the Organ, and I hereby positively agree to promptly refund you your money, with interest at 6 per cent. If you don't want to buy just now, why not come and see me, anyway? Look at the Organ, hear it played, and see for yourself. YOU ARE WELCOME. FREE COACH meets you at train. Don't fail to visit my factory, as it is by far the Largest Organ Works in Existence. ☞ Shipments of Beatty's Organs during the past three months were as follows: September, 1,600; October, 1,800; November, (2 Holidays), 1,800. TOTAL, 5,000. This is as many Organs shipped as any two of the largest Organ Builders in America combined, and it is beyond a doubt positive proof that the public are buying Beatty's Organs in preference to other makes.

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In order to enable me to introduce this Organ at once, I beg to make the following liberal Limited Time Reduction:

"BEATTY'S BEST" PARLOR ORGANS, PRICE	$200
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	112
☞ If ordered within 25 Days only	$88
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Or, if ordered within 9 days, only $75 buys this Magnificent Parlor Organ, including a handsome Bench (or Stool), Book and Music.

☞ You will observe in making you the above offer I have sacrificed the discount usually allowed to Traveling and General Agencies, and have allowed a special limited reduction that must come out of my pocket (manufacturer's profit) to you if ordered within 9 days. I have made this special reduction so as to induce you to order immediately, thus introducing this Marvellous at Now $200 Parlor Organ in your vicinity at once. Remember if ordered within 9 days after date of this Newspaper, only $75; within 12 days, $80; within 25 days, $88. After that date the price will positively be $200 in a vicinity after first Organ has been introduced. Cut this advertisement out, as it will not appear again. To secure this great offer remit at once by Post Office Money Order, Bank Draft, Registered Letter, or by Express prepaid, or if convenient, call and select the instrument yourself. If you don't want an Organ, order as an investment anyway, thus realizing $125 profit, if ordered within 9 days. Bear in mind only one will be sold in any one vicinity, at above limited time price. You can readily dispose of this Organ at $200 cash, and make a handsome profit. I am sure that there must be some one in your vicinity who wants an Organ.

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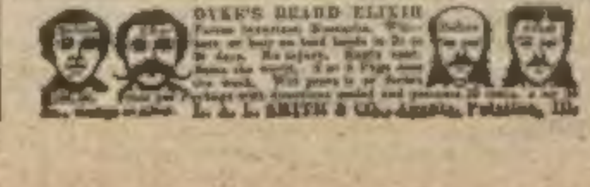

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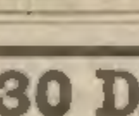

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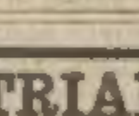

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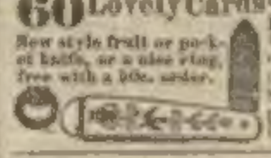

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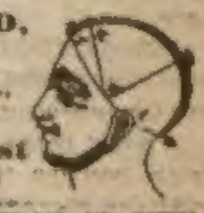

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Ladies' Department.

FASHION CHAT.

THE gay season having begun, and promising to be a brilliant one as well as a long one, fashionable dressmakers are chiefly occupied in creating a variety of ball dresses, reception and dinner dresses and visiting dresses, which shall do duty during this Winter campaign.

For the first—the ball dresses—they use much tulle, principally white for young ladies, the draperies being massed cloud-like on foundations of white satin or faille, and held by bunches of flowers.

The neck cut round and low, the sleeves mere little puffs, below which only a few inches of the arm shows, the cream-colored white, pearl-gray, or tan-colored Suede gloves reaching well above the elbow.

The hair is tossed up with careless grace, and a few flowers added to the left side, or again, it is waved loosely over the top of the head, and left to hang on the neck in four or five thick, short curls, held together by a long Rhinestone, silver or gilt ornament, if a low style of coiffure is more becoming than a high one—and this is apt to be the case when the face is long and narrow or the neck thin.

This whole toilet is absolutely charming for a young person, being elegant, graceful fresh and youthful at once.

The same idea is, of course, carried out in colors, white tulle being draped over pink, brick red tulle over satin of the same color (brick red is particularly fashionable for the evening this Winter), amber tulle over amber satin, and so on.

Still the preference for pure white remains unchanged in most cases.

For reception and dinner dresses the style is severe—long, plain trains, heavily plaited at the top, to hang in straight, majestic folds, and often detached from the underdress, are the newest feature they present, if new it may be called.

The caught-up trains of last year, forming a bunch or drapery over the bustle, have now the look of last year, and when they can be modified into the prevailing style it should be done.

The princesse back, with a pointed bodice front, still continues to be used, though the detached bodice, pointed both in front and behind, is, perhaps, more popular. In every case the front of the toilet is of different material, very often of a different color also, from the bodice and train.

And for these the handsomest thing still continues to be embroidery—embroidery done richly in relief, with chenille and pearl or jet beads, and silver, crystal and gold worked in.

Lace is not thought quite so fashionable, but a great deal of it is worn, nevertheless, and a newer appearance is given to flounces and draperies by mixing strands of chenille tipped with jet or long jet drops, or loops narrow velvet ribbon with jet balls attached to them, among the folds of the lace.

Jetted tulle, in flounces and draperies, is also much used by fashionable dressmakers for reception and dinner dresses.

A great many trains are of plain velvet, with bodices to match, adorned with a plastron corresponding with the front of the toilet; and so the ban against plain velvet, which existed last Winter, black and white is still a very popular combination for toilets of this character.

One worn by a well known society woman at the Vanderbilt ball was of black velvet with the front of white satin, embroidered in silver and crystal beads.

Another superb model of a black and white dinner dress has a peaked bodice and square train of black velvet, and a front of white satin, over which is placed a tablier of black tulle, embroidered in jet tulips, and finished with a deep valance of black point lace.

The bodice is square at the neck, with a high plaited and wired collar of black point lace flaring, like an opera fan, behind only, and a drapery of lace brought down on either side of the plastron of white satin, covered, like the tablier, with a jet embroidered net.

There are no sleeves, a flounce of lace alone falling over the top part of the arm.

Full paniers of velvet are gathered under the peak of the bodice and caught up to the sides of the train.

A third toilet, all black, has a square train of brocaded ottoman plaited in very heavy, deep folds, and thrown up by a huge bustle over the edge of the basque of the very short bodice, which is likewise of brocaded ottoman.

The neck is open in heart shape and folds of black tulle embroidered with jet trim the front and after forming a sort of vest below the square opening, turn over the hips in small paniers.

A narrow front of this jet embroidered tulle falls over plain black satin, with three little ruffings of satin at the foot.

The sides are covered with flouncings of lace about eight inches in depth, set diagonally in rows, and over these flounces fall at intervals pendants of jet drops suspended from loops of narrow black velvet ribbon.

A toilet of brick red satin with a plain long train and a front elaborately embroidered in pomegranates wrought in red beads the peaked bodice cut square at the neck and finished with a Medici collar covered with beads, was recently worn at a fashionable wedding and was a fit representative specimen of the style of toilet of which we are speaking.

A capote glistening all over with brick red beads over satin, and finished with a cluster of pale pink tips and aigrettes to match, completed the toilet.

And so there is nothing very new in dinner and reception dresses, as can be seen.

But as the style recently pitched upon is the best possible for the purpose, as it is so artistic and so satisfactory in every sense, people do not tire of it, and necessitating imperatively as it does rich and costly fabrics, it is in no danger whatever of growing common.

And here again it may be said that the best economy in buying a dress of this character is to have it as handsome as the purchaser's means will in any way allow.

The caprices of fashion, so ephemeral where relatively cheap things are concerned, have far less weight where really rich things are in question.

Women of a certain age, especially, who get one beautiful reception dress of the sort we have described, if they cannot afford more, can wear it with perfect propriety for several seasons, perhaps changing some of the minutiæ a trifle to suit the prevailing taste.

They will always be handsomely dressed even though their toilet may not date from last year.

Visiting costumes are being made quite a great deal with little visites of the same material, trimmed with chenille, fur, or feather bands.

One such costume of wine-colored velvet and ottoman brocade noticed at a tea had a visite or the ottoman fitting tightly to the back behind, and falling in front in long, loose tabs.

The whole thing was trimmed with chinchilla.

The capote, to match, was made with full plaits in the crown, these plaits gathered in behind under a silver horse-shoe.

A bunch of crimson, gray, and wine-colored feathers and aigrettes was set on the front.

The puffed brim was studded at intervals with silver acorns.

The muff is of velvet, with a bow of wine-colored ribbon set in the midst of a quilled bunch of wine-colored lace, held by a silver horseshoe.

Another costume seen at the same tea was of seal brown velvet, with a short cape very much shirred and very high on the shoulders.

The suit was trimmed with silver fox.

The capote was of brown velvet, with a full crown, and a band of silver fox around the brim, and on the left side of a fox's head.

Another fox's head was on the velvet muff. The lady of the house was dressed in red brocaded velvet, the front of the toilet being of plain pink satin, with flounces of white lace over it.

At her waist she wore pink roses. Her daughter was dressed in a charming toilet of white crepe de Chine, embroidered on the front in lilies of the valley.

Among other costumes noticed at teas we will note a drab tailor-made cloth suit, worn with a cloth bonnet to match, and a boa and muff of black fur.

Also a deep garnet vicuña suit, embroidered with ornaments of braid to match on the front of the jacket, and the long square overdress cut up the left side a la Grecque. The bonnet of vicuña to match, with full aigrette and tips held by a cat's head on the front.

Fireside Chat.

SPOTS AND STAINS.

(CONTINUED FROM LAST WEEK)

THEY simply wetted the fruit stains with the tip of the finger with clean water, struck a match, and held it so that the sulphurous vapor was diffused over the surface of the satin; sometimes two matches were needed for a stain of extra size, rarely more.

When the dress came from the wash the stain had vanished completely.

Sulphurous acid may be generated also for larger fumigations by burning some sulphur under the wide end of a paper funnel, and applying the narrow end of the funnel close to the cloth.

Stains of wine, morello cherries, liqueurs, and, indeed, all the juices of fruits, and the colored juices of vegetables in general, will yield to this treatment, which should be preceded by a good soaping with the hand if possible, but with delicate materials and certain colors, wetting and careful usage of the sulphurous fumes must be sufficient.

Stains made by vegetable substances may also be removed by rubbing on a little soda or pearlash, or a mixture of ammonia and spirits of wine, and leaving them to soak in it for some time.

Some vegetable stains can be removed by sour buttermilk.

We enter now on a far more difficult branch of our subject, compound spots—i. e., those composed of two substances (sometimes opposite ones) which require different treatment for their removal.

A mixture of rust of iron and grease, such as might be obtained while touching or passing some iron object in process of cleaning, is an example of this, and the grease must be first attacked and then the rust.

Both of these processes I have already described.

City mud—as examined and described "consists of vegetable remains and of iron in a state of black oxide."

This requires two processes; the first, washing with clean water and soap, to discharge the vegetable remains; next, the iron must be removed with cream of tartar, which, in its turn, must be washed out.

Ink stains, when quite fresh, may be taken out by washing—first with pure water, secondly with soapy water; and, lastly, with lemon juice.

Oxalic acid, however, is the only treatment for them if old.

The stains of milk and coffee are another compound stain. Delicate silk dresses must be treated with a mixture consisting of five parts of glycerine and five of water, with a fourth part of ammonia added. A small piece of the silk should be tested with the mixture, in order to discover if the addition of ammonia changes the color of the material; if so, the ammonia must be left out.

Apply the glycerine and water with a soft brush and leave it for the night undisturbed, then rub with a clean cloth.

The dry substance should be removed first with a knife, and the spots washed with clean water, and pressed between two towels to dry.

The treatment of the same stains on woolen, or fabrics of mixed materials, is slightly different.

Mix one ounce of glycerine, nine ounces of water, and half an ounce of ammonia; apply repeatedly with a brush during the day, then press the places in a cloth; when dry, the stains will generally be gone.

Another method of dealing with the same stains is to wash them in a very hot water (120 deg. Fahr.) and soap carefully, and afterwards use a sulphur fumigation, as prescribed for fruit stains.

The two last named processes may be repeated several times if the material will allow.

Chocolate stains may be treated in the same way. Tea stains may be taken out in the same way as coffee stains—with glycerine and water.

I have already alluded to ink stains, but forgot to mention that the Pharmacien's Journal gives a valuable recipe to be used if the ink be aniline, which is, to moisten the stains with strong alcohol, mixed with acetic acid.

Pyrophosphate of sodium is also recommended for general use for the same purpose; use as follows:

A little tallow should be dropped on the inkstains, and then they should be washed in a solution of the sodium till the stain and the grease have both vanished. The process may be repeated if not successful. This has been found most valuable, especially with violet ink.

Gravy stains in delicate silks may be removed by washing first with soap and water, to dissolve the vegetable matter and salts, then a little turpentine, to take out the oil and fat.

Lastly, those stains must be considered which change the color of the stuff. To black or brown cloth, which has been reddened by an acid, a little liquid ammonia will restore the color.

Stains from alkalies or soap may be treated with lemon juice or white vinegar.

Stains of marking ink may be removed by being soaked in a solution of chloride of lime, or rubbed with tincture of iodine, and lastly, in both cases, wash with a solution of iodine.

Amongst the most useful and necessary articles in the house will be found a bottle of ammonia, of turpentine, and of benzine, and, when a bottle of purified oxgall is added, the housekeeper is armed against nearly all the stains and spots that may befall her household and herself. All these should be carefully labelled and placed in a cupboard at hand. Turpentine and benzine are applied with a flannel, ammonia with a piece of the same material as that operated on, and the purified oxgall with a sponge.

Correspondence.

A. S.—Godfathers and godmothers were originally called sponsors.

GEORGE.—The firm you mentioned is one of the oldest in Philadelphia. 2. We do not know.

EDWARD.—We advise you propose marriage to her at once, or the other young man, who probably loves her as passionately as you do, will ask her the first opportunity he has. 2. Consult a lawyer.

M. P. M.—Leanness and obesity are both more or less constitutional. You may, however, reduce your corpulency by taking a great deal of exercise, abstaining from glutinous species of food, eating pickles, salads, &c.

LILLY P.—It is not necessary for you to get other "company," and we do not tell you to forget the young man, for that would probably be impossible for you, but we do tell you to learn to despise him from the bottom of your heart.

FINLAY.—You must go through a severe course of study and of training before thinking about coming out as an actor. Even then it might not be advisable for you to enter out upon the life of an actor. Actors, like poets, are born, not made.

FADED.—Neither of the extremes is regarded as beautiful in a lady. The mean is looked upon as the most becoming. It is quite proper in a lady to use any legitimate means to improve her appearance. 2. Yes, it is fashionable with certain ladies to part their hair on the left side. In some ladies it is becoming, in some not.

AGAMEMNON.—Get your mother to make inquiries for you. If it is as you say, better not proceed. It would scarcely be decorous for you to inquire, but your mother might do so, as she has already taken some interest in the matter. A mother's counsel is never to be despised. If it is unheeded, there often comes a time of poignant regret.

J. R.—The engagement seems to have been so much a matter of business on your side, and seems to be now so much a matter of indifference on the gentleman's side, that the amount of harm done to either of you by breaking it off cannot be very great. We should judge from your statement that the gentleman is quite as ready to give up the engagement as you are.

PERRUQUIER.—There is nothing which you can depend upon to make your hair curl if nature has determined to make it straight. It may be that the straightness is only a temporary thing, which will pass away after a while. The falling out of your hair was probably only a decrease of vitality in your system, and the same cause may occasion the present condition. Consult your family physician.

J. M. A.—Perhaps the young lady's affections were already engaged before you paid your addresses to her. We will, however, make one suggestion to you: Devote yourself chiefly to other people, and to other purposes than making love. Girls, somehow, instinctively seem frequently to despise abject lovers whose whole being seems devoted to these girls themselves.

LOVEL.—Shakspeare says:

"Let still the woman take
An elder than herself; so wears she to him,
So sways she level in her husband's heart.
For, boy, however we do praise ourselves,
Our fancies are more giddy and unfirm,
More longing wavering, sooner lost and won."

T. N.—If a gentleman sends his regards to you by a common friend, it is proper to say "it's very kind of him," or acknowledge the courtesy in some such terms. If the gentleman is going away, or for any reason you are not likely to see him as soon as the friend who brings the message, you may, if you choose, send your regards, or desire to be remembered. It is not necessary, however, to do so.

MARIE.—"Trimmer" was a term applied to Charles Montague, Earl of Halifax, and others who held similar political opinions midway between those of the extreme Whigs and Tories, about the latter part of the 17th century. He assumed the right as an honor, asserting that it could be rightly given to the constitution and Church. Macaulay says that Halifax was a trimmer on principle and not a renegade. He died in 1715.

REPENTANT.—Not an edifying story or a creditable episode in the life of one so young. The whole affair has been wondrously silly. Devote the next few months, perhaps years, to the honest discharge of duty at home, and leave such romancing for the present. The matter must certainly drop now, unless all proper feeling is to be stifled and self-respect sacrificed on the threshold of life. Leave the matter to time.

F. AND T.—We readily accept your apologies for your impatience, the more so because we are well aware that impatience is one of the virtues of your sex; and however inconvenient it may prove to some people occasionally, it deserves a certain amount of commendation as being the power that drives some matters to a conclusion that would otherwise drag on to an interminable length of time. We, in common with most men, would prefer a wife who likes to see her household duties performed with dispatch to one whose sluggish disposition let things take a lazy course.

MARION.—The best plan would be to leave the case as it stands, and not try to apportion the blame. There are some things that it is well to bear. The course which the husband is taking seems to us the expedient way in the business. In any event, all that can be done has been done. Leave the future, and do not blame yourself or any other member of the family. All will come right if you are calm. The "righteous indignation" exhibited by a near relative is pardonable, but out of place. If you hear more of the matter, simply, and in a dignified way, refer the employers to the other family.

I. P. N.—Byron ("English Bards") says:—

"So the stretched eagle quivering on the plain,
No more through rolling clouds to soar again,
Viewed his own feathers on the fatal dart,
And winged the shaft that quivered in his heart."

Waller has:—

"The eagle's fate and mine are one,
Which on the shaft that made him die
Espied a feather of his own,
Wherewith he's wont to soar on high."

The latter poet died in 1687.